Wanted Dead or Alive: Rewards in the West

TRUE WEST

May 1997

The Lost Gold of La Tules

Powder Springs: Outlaw Hideout

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PRESENTS

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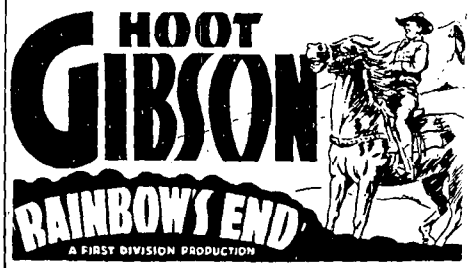


Sinister Six-Gun's 35mm Collection

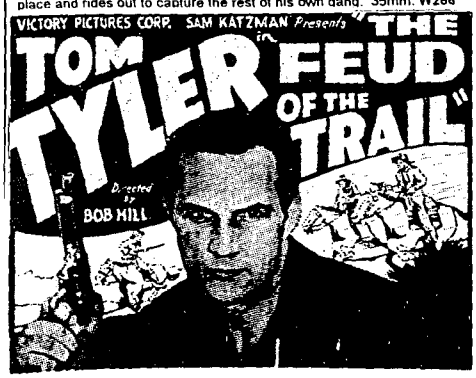
All titles on this page were coverted to 3/4" video master from original 35mm theatrical prints — many of them for the first time. You've simply never seen these films on video before until you've seen our copies!

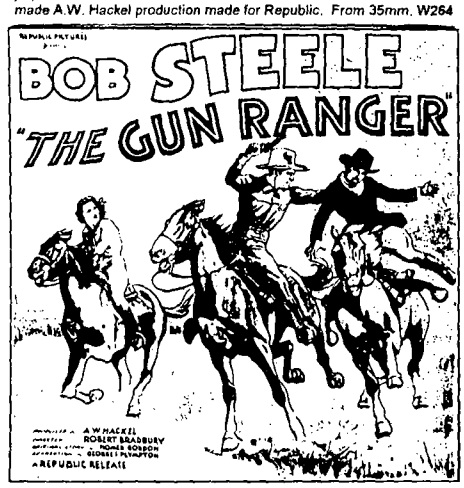
ROLL ON TEXAS MOON (1946, Republic) Roy Rogers, Dale Evan, Gabby Hayes, Bob Nolan, Dennis Hoey ,Kenne Duncan. UNCUT! This was the first of 27 Rogers films directed by serial veteran Wiliam Witney, who brought to them more action and livelier pacing in favor of songs and gaudy costumes. *Plot concerns a bloody dispute between cattlemen and sheepherders. It's up to Roy and the boys to prevent an all-out range war in this polished, highly entertaining Republic production.* One great scene has Evans driving down a narrow canyon. Suddenly, her car goes out of control, shoots over the edge, and crashes into a raging river below! 35mm. W281

RAINBOW'S END (1935, First Division) Hoot Gibson, June Gale, Buddy Roosevelt, Warner Richmond, John Elliott. This is without a doubt one of Hoot's finest westerns. He finds himself in the awkward position of helping out a rancher at odds with Hoot's own father. The real problem it turns out is daddy's crooked partner who's out to undermine the rancher and scarf up his property. Good script, good cast, good acting--this is a marvelous blend of B western action and Gibson's engaging country humor. Recommended. 35mm. W113

BULLDOG COURAGE (1936, Puritan) Tim McCoy, Joan Woodbury, Paul Fix, Eddie Buzzard. This very interesting McCoy film has Tim playing a phantom outlaw who steals gold shipments from stagecoaches in retaliation for having lost his gold mine to an unscrupulous banker on a legal technicality. He is tracked down and fatally wounded by a posse. Years later, his son (also played by Tim) comes back to tangle with the crooked banker. Most of Tim's films for Puritan were pretty good, and this one is no exception. 35mm. W111

FEUD OF THE TRAIL (1937, Victory) Tom Tyler, Harlene Wood, Dick Alexander. After rescuing a man robbed by outlaws, Tom finds out some startling news: It seems the leader of the gang is a dead ringer for him! Tom sets out to track the bandit down. There's a gunfight; the gang leader is killed. Tom then takes the dead bandit's place and rides out to capture the rest of his own gang. 35mm. W266





THE GUN RANGER (1936, Supreme/Republic) Bob Steele, Eleanor Stewart, John Merton, Ernie Adams, Earl Dwire, Budd Buster, Wally Wales. Bob plays a lawdog who, along with the rest of the town, awaits a verdict on a local badman being tried for murder. The whole town is shocked when the killer is freed on a technicality which was set up by the killer's lawyer and a crooked district attorney. Bob resigns from the Rangers in disgust and promises to act as judge, jury, and executioner as he rids the town of the low-lifes. *Another well made A.W. Hackel production made for Republic. From 35mm.* W264

THE LIGHT OF WESTERN STARS (1940, Paramount) Russell Hayden, Victor Jory, Jo Ann Sayers, Noah Beery, Jr., Tom Tyler, Eddie Dean, Alan Ladd. A big-name cast is featured in this quality Paramount western thriller. Jory plays a hard-drinking, reckless cowboy who finds himself at odds with a crooked sheriff and a notorious gun runner to Mexico. A nice array of western characters compliments the action-laden proceedings. From 35mm. W274

STORMY TRAILS (1936, Colony) Rex Bell, Bob Hodges, Lois Wilde, Lane Chandler, Earl Dwire, Karl Hackett. Rex gets into a gunfight during a bank robbery and shoots one of the thieves in self-defense. However, the dead bandit is one of Rex's ex-ranch hands who was suing him. Rex is arrested on suspicion of murder. *Rustlers, robberies, jailbreaks, stampedes, etc., are all part of this enjoyable B western thriller. From a beautiful 35mm print.* W263

THE FIGHTING PARSON (1933, Allied) Hoot Gibson, Marceline Day, Skeeter Bill Robbins, Charlie King. *Hoot and Skeeter are cowpokes on the lam after being caught playing craps with loaded dice.* Hoot finds the clothes and identification papers of a parson on the desert floor and decides to assume the holy man's identity. He hits town right before a hanging, but convinces the townspeople to be forgiving and let the outlaw go, Hoot will be responsible for him. The truth of the matter is that the outlaw knows Hoot's real identity and threatens to blow his cover unless he steps in and saves him. A very amusing Gibson film. *The scene where Charlie King forces the real parson to disrobe at gunpoint is pretty hilarious.* 35mm. W253

THE COWBOY COUNSELOR (1932, Allied) Hoot Gibson, Sheila Mannors, Skeeter Bill Robbins, Bobby Nelson, Fred Gilman, Jack Rutherford. *Another superior Gibson action-comedy.* Hoot plays a con-man posing as a frontier lawyer who goes around town selling a bogus law book. Things get serious though when he agrees to defend a young man falsely accused of a stagecoach robbery. The courtroom scenes that follow are quite amusing. Hoot's only able to establish reasonable doubt in the jury's mind after he dons the scarf of the real bandit and commits another robbery. There's just one problem: The stagecoach he robs just happens to be the one the trial judge is riding on. *Uh-oh! Cute, clever, and funny. Recommended.* 35mm. W250

SUNSET SERENADE (1942, Republic) Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Helen Parrish, Onslow Stevens, Joan Woodbury. UNCUT! A tiny infant boy inherits a huge ranch. Stevens and Woodbury are shifty characters trying get their slimy hands on the property. Roy faces grave danger trying to protect the baby boy's right of property. One terrific scene has Roy rescuing a wounded man in a narrow canyon when a nearby damn is suddenly dynamited! A monstrous wall of water comes rushing down on top of them. From 35mm. W276

THE IDAHO KID (1936, Colony) Rex Bell, Dave Sharpe, Marion Shilling, Lane Chandler, Charlie King, Lafe McKee, Earl Dwire. Rex plays a roaming cowboy who wanders back to his home town after many years, having run away at an early age. He is not recognized by either his natural father or his stepfather, both of whom have a feud against each other. Can he keep his two "parents" from killing each other? *It's not going to be easy.* From 35mm. W265

THUNDER OVER TEXAS (1934, Beacon) Guinn "Big Boy" Williams, Marion Shilling, Helen Westcott, Claude Payton. A man is brutally murdered in a struggle over some valuable railroad maps *which contain prized information about the proposed location of a new railroad line.* The killers will do anything to obtain them, including threatening the life of the murdered man's young daughter. Guinn sets out to protect her and track the killers down. From 35mm. W254

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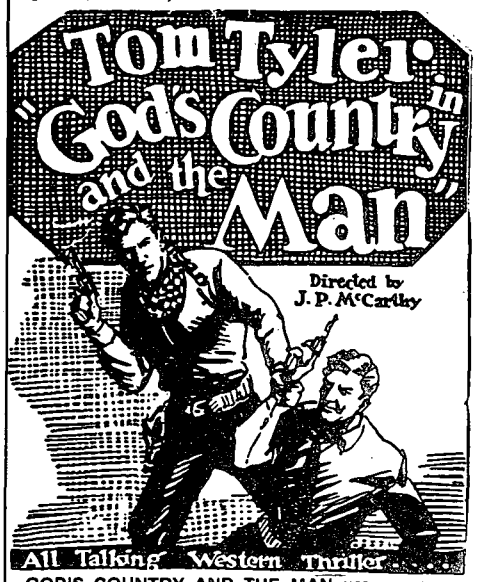
MORE SINISTER SIX-GUN TITLES

BEYOND THE LAW (1930, Syndicate) Lane Chandler, Robert Frazer, Charlie King, Louise Lorraine. A border saloon--half in Nevada, half in California--is a hangout for a nasty gang of frontier gangsters. Chandler and Frazer get mixed up in things when the gang's leader literally falls into their laps. Very rare. 16mm. W242

CANYON HAWKS (1930, Big 4) Yakima Canutt, Wally Wales, Buzz Barton, Rene Borden. *First time on video!* This is the closest that Yak ever came to playing a lead, hero role in a talkie B western. Yak comes to the aid of some embattled sheepherders. Long thought to be lost, our master was taken from a rare 16mm print, which--years ago--was professionally edited down to around 40 minutes. W243



GOD'S COUNTRY AND THE MAN (1931, Syndicate, *aka TRAIL OF THE LAW*) Tom Tyler, Gabby Hayes, Betty Mack, Al Bridge. Next to BORN TO BATTLE, this is the best Tyler western we've seen to date. Tom is a tough special agent sent to a lonely border town to bring in Livermore, one of the most ruthless criminals in the region. Livermore--a really *bad* dude--plays a death waltz on the violin to his victims before slaying them. Gabby is great as Tom's outlaw pal. Will they come back alive? Not the kind of ending you'd *expect. Much better-than-usual cinematography (almost Germanic in* places) with many striking interior shots of Livermore's crude, yet lavish saloon. No relation to the '37 Tom Keene film. 16mm. W244

CALL OF THE ROCKIES (1931, Syndicate) Ben Lyon, Marie Prevost, Russell Simpson, Anders Randolph. *First time on video!* A trio of nomadic outlaws join a wagon train passing over the Rockies. They scheme with a band of indians to attack and plunder the settlers in this incredibly rare western thriller. From 16mm. W245

WHISTLIN' DAN (1932, Tiffany) Ken Maynard, Joyzelle Joyner, Georges Renevant, Don Terry. A great B western. A powerful desperado named Karloff holds Ken's saddle-pal for ransom. Ken's got until sundown to deliver $5000 or his buddy will be executed! Ken doesn't make it in time (the execution scene is an eye-opener). Ken swears to track down and kill the murderous renegade in what is probably Ken's best western for Tiffany studios. From 16mm. W246

THE TEXAN (1932, Principal Attraction) Buffalo Bill, Jr., Lucile Browne, Jack Mower, Bobby Nelson, Yakima Canutt. Compared to his later work for Superior Pictures, this early Buffalo Bill, Jr. western isn't all that bad. The plot has Bill being wanted by the law and becoming involved with a crooked horse race scheme. 16mm. W247

MYSTERY RANCH (1932, Reliable) George O'Brien, Cecilia Parker, Charles Middleton, Roy Stewart, Noble Johnson. A horror western if there ever was one, gothic and Germanic in a way not ever approached by any other B western. Middleton is unforgettable as a maniacal ranch baron who considers himself the self-appointed lord of his region. O'Brien is in top form as the special agent sent in to stop his nefarious schemes (none of George's predecessors have ever come back). Johnson is excellent as Mudo, Middleton's monstrous, murdering henchman. Dark, creepy, and intense. Any fan of '30s horror will be impressed. One heluva western, too. 16mm. W248

GOLD (1932, Majestic) Jack Hoxie, Alice Day, Hooper Atchley, Tom London, Lafe McKee. Jack sells his gold mine to an old-timer, then blows his money partying. When the old-timer is found murdered and his money stolen, Jack becomes the prime suspect. 16mm. W249

WAR OF THE RANGE (1933, Freuler/Monarch) Tom Tyler, Lane Chandler, Caryl Lincoln. FIRST TIME ON VIDEO! Here's one that hasn't been around since the earliest days of TV. Tom plays a cowpuncher who tries to avert a range war between his stubborn father and a shifty rancher. Tom's told to hit the road by Dad though, when he defends a nester family settling on their land. 16mm. W252

THE LONE AVENGER (1933, World Wide) Ken Maynard, Muriel Gordon, Charlie King, Al Bridge. Ken's dad, a prominent banker, is found dead, supposedly from suicide. Ken thinks otherwise and sets out to prove it. The final showdown scene is excellent as the antagonists wait inside a saloon on a dark, *very* dark, rainy night. The nail-biting suspense that builds is quite effective and most unusual for your average B western. *A nice effort. Recommended.* 16mm. W251

COWBOY MILLIONAIRE (1935, Atherton/Fox) George O'Brien, Evelyn Bostock, Edgar Kennedy, Alden Chase. George is a dude ranch cowboy who falls for a classy British broad. A scheme to take his gold mine away eventually lands him in England where he confronts the bad guy and wins the hand of his lady fair. 16mm. W255

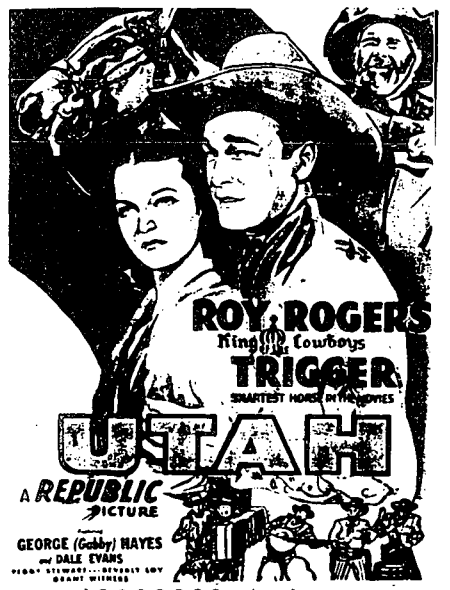
HIS FIGHTING BLOOD (1935, Ambassador) Kermit Maynard, Polly Ann Young, Paul Fix, Ted Adams. Kermit's films for Ambassador were some of the best B westerns of the mid-thirties. In this entertaining action piece, Kermit finds his brother falling in with thieves. They eventually order him to kill Kermit! From 16mm. W256

OUTLAW RULE (1935, Kent) Reb Russell, Yakima Canutt, Betty Mack, Jack Rockwell, John McGuire. A rancher, frustrated by *cattle rustling and apathetic law enforcement, shoots the local sheriff* dead. Or does he? Reb tries to sort things out. From 16mm. W257

BIG BOY RIDES AGAIN (1935, Beacon) Guinn Williams, Connie Bergen. Guinn's the heir to the estate of his dad, who was shot by a masked killer. Who did it? An "old dark ranch" forgotten horrors style thriller, complete with leering chinamen, masked figures peering through windows, secret trapdoors, hidden cellars, etc. 16mm. W241

THUNDERBOLT (1935, Regal) Kane Richmond, Bobby Nelson, Lafe McKee. In a small western town, a pair of crooked deputies steal a gold shipment and murder a young boy's father. Kane gets the blame, but the boy and his dog set out to track the real killer down. Very rare and probably first time on video. 16mm. W258

BRANDED A COWARD (1935, Supreme) Johnny Mack *Brown, Billie Seward, Syd Saylor.* As a boy, Johnny witnesses the massacre of his entire family by outlaws, but he does nothing even though he holds a gun in his hand. 20 years later he is known as a coward until an outlaw called, "The Cat" comes to town. 16mm. W259



HAIR TRIGGER CASEY (1936, Atlantic) Jack Perrin, Betty Mack. Jack's a cowboy cop that comes home to his ranch to find himself up against a Chinese smuggling racket. A nice blend of yellow peril and western themes. From a knockout 16mm print. W260

THE TRAITOR (1936, Puritan) Tim McCoy, Wally Wales, Frances Grant. Tim's a hard-nosed Texas Ranger. His captain fires him for cowardice! It's all a put-on, though, as Tim tracks down a western crime boss known as "Big George." Good fun. 16mm. W261

BLAZING JUSTICE (1936, Spectrum) Bill Cody, Gertrude Messinger, Gordon Griffith. Bill' a cowhand who captures a couple of rustlers. There's a reward, too--$5000! He starts out on vacation but runs into trouble & ends up getting accused of murder! 16mm. W262

WILD HORSE RODEO (1937, Republic) Bob Livingston, Ray Corrigan, Max Terhune. A superior 3 Mesquiteers epic.. Stoney's a hot rider on the rodeo circuit. He returns home to track down a legendary wild horse known as "Cyclone." Stoney wants him for the rodeo; Tucson says no. Stunning Lone Pine locations. 16mm. W267

THE LAW COMMANDS (1937, Crescent) Tom Keene, Lorraine Hayes, Bud Buster, John Merton. Night riders are killing and terrorizing homesteaders all over the region. Tom's a doctor who tries to keep the homesteaders from taking the law into their own hands. Soon after though, another settler is killed, further enraging Tom and the townfolk. Tom soon gets a star pinned on his shirt. 16mm. W268

RIDIN' THE LONE TRAIL (1937, Supreme/Republic) Bob Steele, Claire Rochelle, Charlie King, Ernie Adams. Stagecoaches are being robbed by a gang of thieves headed by a mysterious hooded killer who rides a great white horse known as "White Peril." Lawman Bob is brought in to investigate. He discovers the horse belongs to the girl he has a crush on. Who's really guilty? A terrific climax features Bob and the killer duking it out on an electric hand-car. Suddenly the sound of an on-coming train is heard! 16mm. W269

PANAMINT'S BAD MEN (1938, Principal) Smith Ballew, Evelyn Daw, Noah Beery, Sr. A slick Ballew western. This time he's a marshal out to round up a gang of badass bank robbers. The leader's a corrupt saloon owner played to the hilt by Beery. From 16mm. W271

WHERE THE WEST BEGINS (1938, Monogram) Jack Randall, Luana Walters, Fuzzy Knight, Budd Buster. Jack plays a ranch foreman for a young girl who doesn't really care much about her ranch (she wants to become a New York actress). Her apathy is soon the target of rustlers and a shifty land speculator. From 16mm. W270

WESTBOUND STAGE (1939, Monogram) Tex Ritter, Nelson McDowell, Muriel Evans, Nolan Willis. A wagon train crossing the plains comes across the remains of three other wagon trains that have been sacked by looters. They, too, are soon attacked. 16mm. W272

GUN CODE (1940, PRC) Tim McCoy, Ina Guest, Lou Fulton, Alden Chase, Ted Adams. A gang of extortionists are squeezing blood money out of a small town in return for "protection." When a local citizen threatens to expose the gang's leader, he is murdered. The victim is Tim's dad! All hell soon breaks loose. 16mm. W273

LONE STAR LAWMEN (1941, Monogram) Tom Keene, Sugar Dawn, Betty Miles, Frank Yaconelli. Outlaws are out of control! Another border town needs cleaning up, and Tom's just the man to do it. Yaconelli has a hilarious scene with an accordion. 16mm. W275

THE SOMBRERO KID (1942, Republic) Don "Red" Barry, Lynn Merrick, Robert Homans. Don's adopted father, a U.S. Marshal, is murdered by a high-handed town boss. Don poses as an outlaw to infiltrate the gang and bring the killer to justice. 16mm. W277

TRAIL RIDERS *(1942, Monogram) John King, Dave Sharpe,* Max Terhune, Evelyn Finley, Charlie King. The sheriff of Gila Springs is gunned down by outlaws, leaving the town wide open to corruption. The Range Busters ride in to clean things up. From 16mm. W278

THE DRIFTER (1944, PRC) Buster Crabbe, Al St. John, Carol Parker, Kermit Maynard. Buster is good in a rare "good guy-bad guy" dual role. The good guy is a Robin Hood type riding the range and helping others. The bad guy is a notorious bank robber who cashes in on the good guy's reputation. A better-than-usual PRC. 16mm. W279

UTAH (1945, Republic) Roy Rogers, Dale Evans, Gabby Hayes, Grant Withers. UNCUT! Considered one of Roy's finest films. Dale plays a city gal who comes home to the family ranch with the intention of selling it. Roy and Gabby do their best to dissuade her. Withers is the villain out to snatch up the property. A nice mix of action, comedy, and songs. Even if you're not big on songs you'll be captivated by some truly fine tunes by the Sons of the Pioneers. Slick. 16mm. W280

DEADLINE (1948, Yucca) Sunset Carson, Pat Starling, Lee Roberts, Stephen Keyes. A Pony Express rider uncovers some mysterious goings-on during the construction of a telegraph line. A murder is committed! Sunset gets the blame. From 16mm. W282

BORDER OUTLAWS (1950, Eagle Lion) Spade Cooley, Maria Hart, Bill Edwards. Spade's a dude ranch manager in this rare western about a mysterious masked outlaw known as "The Phantom Horseman." There's a $1000 reward on his head. 16mm. W283

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TRUE WEST

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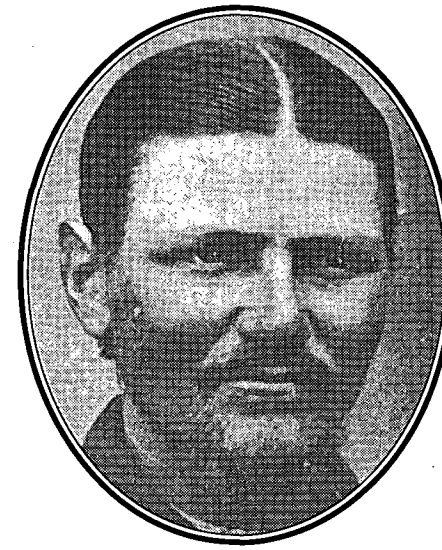

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Our Cover

La Tules, legendary monte dealer.
By Adam Wallenta

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FROM THE EDITOR

Howdy, ya'll!

It was a pretty common thing to do. Wyatt Earp did it with a pig. Belle Starr did it with a horse. Clay Allison did it on a pair of crutches, and it appears that Bat Masterson and Wild Bill Hickok did it every time they got the chance.

I'm talking about getting their photo taken.

In this business of western history, you can't swing a stick without hitting someone claiming to have a "new" photo of Jesse, Calamity, or Butch. The results are often hilarious, sometimes sad, and always memorable. Some photos are passed off with a shrug, some raise a few eyebrows, and some cause collectors to reach for their wallets.

The most sought-after and elusive photos are those of the characters who didn't bother to get their picture snapped enough, or not at all. Curly Bill Brocius and Etta Place come to mind, of course, but it's probably the "lost" photo of Billy the Kid that most people yearn for.

On a cold New Mexico day, William H. Bonney wrapped himself in a large bulky sweater, tilted a crushed black hat back on his head, took his Winchester in hand, and stood long enough to have one, just one, lousy picture taken.

Since that day his photo has taken on an almost iconic status, showing up on everything from t-shirts to beer labels. Even people with only a passing interest in western outlaws can identify the Kid.

A few years back, Ray John de Aragon, a Las Vegas, New Mexico, resident, came forward with an exciting find that sent Billy aficionados and the national media into a tailspin. He produced a photo that, after critical computer analysis, was labeled none other than Billy the Kid. Dressed in a suit and looking clean cut, the lad in the photo appeared less like a desperado and more like an after-school eraser banger. A regular teacher's pet. This isn't really the scourge of New Mexico, is it?

The photo eventually made its way from the de Aragon family collection to the prestigious Swann Galleries where it was auctioned off for an amazing $50,000, plus change. The owner of "Billy the Suit" re-mains unidentified to this day. The photo became, and remains, a hot point of debate for historians and collectors alike; "it's him, no it's not, yes it is," hmmm.

Now, I'm a pretty calm guy so you can imagine my surprise when I opened my mail this week and found a letter and photo from Ray John de Aragon. When you get to our mail section, you'll have the chance to read and view the contents of that letter. I'll let the chips fall where they may and let you decide whether or not the hombre in the photo is our boy Billy or not. Personally I *wish* it was, but I wish it would rain silver dollars on a daily basis and it ain't happened yet.

We do know that Billy had buck teeth, a long chin, and girlish hands and fingers. What we don't know is who this "new" fella is. He's got the chin...but is it him?

Since I'm on the subject of Billy and his exploits, it may be a good time to mention the latest book from Western Publications and NOLA, the National Association for Outlaw and Lawman History.

Gunsmoke in Lincoln County is the second collection of a series of articles by the late Philip Rasch, master historian and trailblazer in the arena of Billy the Kid research. *Gunsmoke* offers both the informed historian and the casual reader a fascinating look at what became one of the most famous range/merchant wars in the American West.

Anyone with an interest in the events that helped shape the legend of Billy the Kid should acquire this limited edition book. Pronto.

Marcus Huff

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WEST SKETCH

BY ADAM WALLENTA

THE HANGING OF CHEROKEE BILL

MARCH 17, 1896, FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS—Crawford "Cherokee Bill" Goldsby is hanged by order of Judge Isaac Parker. More than 200 people travel to witness the execution. Cherokee Bill had cut a path of terror across Indian Territory, killing four men, including his brother-in-law.

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He's got the chin...

Courtesy of Ray John de Aragon

The latest image thought to be "Billy the Kid," from the collection of Ray John de Aragon.

I rushed and ordered a copy of the *Illustrated Life and Times of Billy the Kid* by Bob Boze Bell after I saw an advertisement for it in *True West.* I thoroughly enjoyed the book.

Bell did a splendid job, but he brought up some points that are not facts and need to be clarified. One of the photos he claims is the one of mine of Billy the Kid that was found not to be authentic through computer analysis is actually a photo of Joseph Antrim, Billy's brother. This photo was misidentified by the

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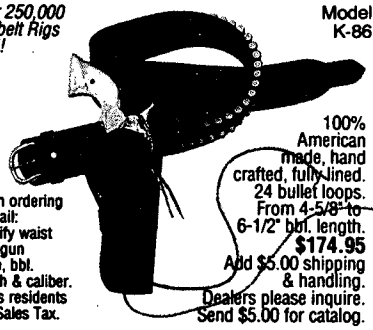

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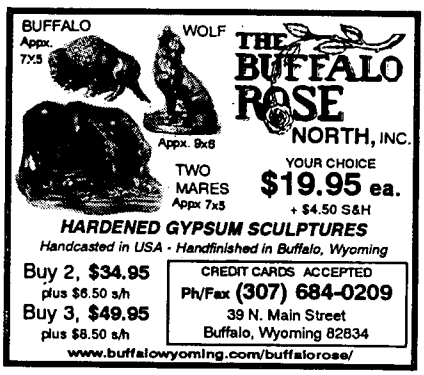

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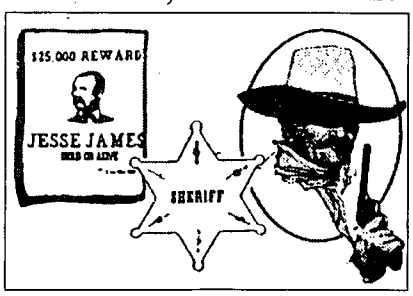

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Courtesy of Ray John de Aragon

The image of Billy the Kid regarded by many as the only authentic in existence.

Lincoln County Heritage Trust Photo Analysis Project and I have a letter from them in which they apologized for the mixup.

As to the tintype of Billy which was authenticated by Dr. Thomas Kyle, who was associated with the LCHT project, which Bell claims most historians do not believe is Billy, it is supported by numerous experts and authorities. In fact, most leading historians, including Robert Utley, Leon Metz, Don Lavash, and Howard Bryan, agree it is a genuine photo of Billy. Utley was the chairman of the LCHT panel, and Metz and Lavash were members of the panel.

Dr. Clyde Snow, a highly recognized figure in forensic anthropology, also supported Dr. Kyle's findings. Dr. Sharon Long, an associate of Dr. Snow, did her own study through facial reconstruction and arrived at similar conclusions as those of Dr. Kyle.

By using sophisticated computer technology, through which he mapped and correlated the facial

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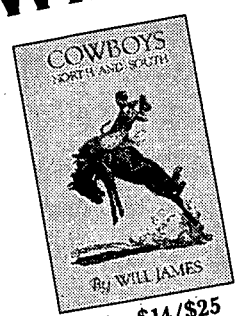

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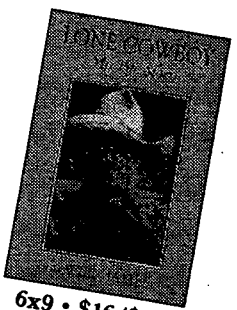

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geometry against the only authenticated photo of Billy and my tintype, Dr. Kyle showed that the two matched perfectly.

Bell is right on one thing though, there is another photo of Billy in my family collection. It is a carte-de-viste photograph taken by James Furlong, in November of 1880 at his studio here in Las Vegas, New Mexico, at 131 Bridge Street, as indicated on the back of the photo. This photo has also been analyzed and authenticated, but one curious detail came up. A scar was discovered on one of the eyebrows. A scar did not show up on the famous photo of Billy when it was subjected to computer enhancement, but it did show up when it was placed through halftone processing. This process breaks an image into dots for printing. The scar is clearly visible in the same area.

So, I'm sending along this latest photo of Billy for you to share with all of your readers. By the way, Sallie Chisum described Billy as wearing the same clothing as he is seen wearing in this picture.—*Ray John de Aragon, Las Vegas, New Mexico.*

Settlement of the Llano Estacado

The Llano Estacado, in northern Texas, was named by the Spaniards who crossed it to establish missions and look for gold in New Mexico. Spanish for "the Staked Plains," the Llano Estacado resembles just that, with beargrass stems sticking up all over resembling stakes.

The ranch land was established as the XIT and had no fences. The cattle on the XIT watered at natural lakes and natural watersheds that we Texans called "draws." Around 1900, the XIT was sold and became smaller ranches; a few were the Matador, Mashed-O, and Spade.

Where sandstone was available, ranch owners lined their cisterns with it, and built gutters to collect rainwater to fill them. I visited a family north of Midland, Texas, in the mid-20's that still used only rainwater. It was okay, except rainwater doesn't taste very good and was full of mosquito larvae (which we called "wiggletails"), which had to be poured through a strainer before using. At the end of the summer you got about as much water as you did wiggletails.

My mother and dad were married in Bowie, Texas, in 1884 and hooked their team to a wagon and left to get one of the claims on the plains between the Floydada and Petersburg settlements. They built a half-dugout, four or five feet deep with dirt steps that had only one big room, dirt floors, and a shingled roof. Dad started raising cattle and hauling merchandise to the small settlements in the Hale County area. The nearest railhead at the time was in Amarillo, about 100 miles north.

Just a short time later it was discovered that water was plentiful just a few feet deep under the plains, and by using a windmill, people could easily farm and supply water to their stock.

If you decide to print my letter, as Joe "Hosstail" Small did many times, please include our address. Nola and I love to hear from your readers.—*Carl and Nola Roberson, 4215 Midlothian Court, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80909.*

More Ghost Towns

I have enjoyed reading *True West* and *Old West* for years.

Can you give us more stories on two of my favorites, Death Valley and Nevada ghost towns?

The Old West will never die as long as you print the stories of history.—*Mel Anderson, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

Wagon Wheels

I am looking for old wagon wheels, or information on how to build them. Any information would be appreciated.—*B. Hargrove, 956 Renfrow Road, Clinton, North Carolina 28328.*

Your letters and comments are welcome. Please keep letters to 300 words or less. All letters received by Western Publications will be considered for publication unless otherwise stipulated in the letter. Space does not permit us to print all letters we receive. Be sure to include full name, address, and zip code. Photos are welcome. Address all letters to Western Publications, PO Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076. E-mail us at, Western@cowboy.net. Due to the volume of mail, we cannot forward correspondence to people whose letters appear in "Truly Western."

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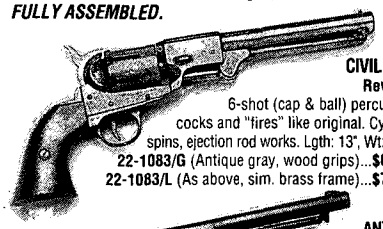

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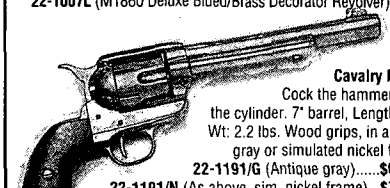

1873 Cavalry Pistol.
Cock the hammer, spin the cylinder. 7" barrel, Length: 13", Wt: 2.2 lbs. Wood grips, in antique gray or simulated nickel frame.
22-1191/G (Antique gray).....**$67 PPD**
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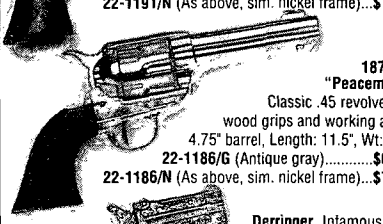

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Classic .45 revolver with wood grips and working action. 4.75" barrel, Length: 11.5", Wt: 2 lbs.
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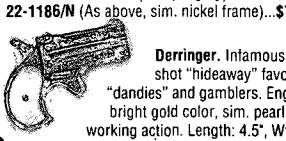

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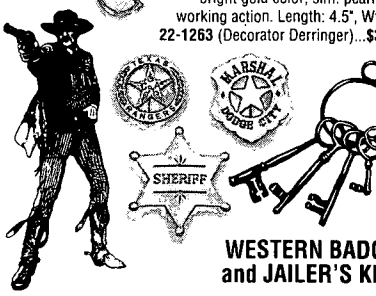

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Buffalo Bill Historical Center

A performer at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's cowboy ballad gathering.

Cowboy Songs and Range Ballads

Anyone interested in the West and good music will want to try and be in Cody, Wyoming, April 4-6, for the Fifteenth Annual Cowboy Songs and Range Ballads Event.

Billed as "the granddaddy of all the nation's cowboy music and poetry festivals," the event will draw cowboy musicians from across the nation to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. The event will showcase music of the open range, performed by men and women who possess an intimate knowledge of the West and its people. In preserving this uniquely American folk tradition, distinct from traditional country music, they pay tribute to all those who came before them–those who consumed trail dust and endured January cold, March blizzards, and blistering summer heat. But even more the event is a celebration of the West's lasting legacy.

The event blends education and entertainment. The history and culture of the American cowboy is explored through the traditional music of the open range. A day-long symposium on Friday, April 4, will bring together speakers who will explore the theme, "From Lyres to Lariats," focusing on the origins of cowboy music.

The first of two evening concerts will be held on Friday at 7:30 in the nearby Wynona Thompson Auditorium. Daytime activities at the historical center will continue on Saturday, April 5, with concurrent sessions in several locations. A second concert will be held that evening at 7:30 at the Wynona Thompson Auditorium. And on Sunday, April 6, the event will wrap up with sessions all afternoon at the historical center.

Past performers have included the Riders of the Purple Sage, Buck Ramsey, Howard Parker, Glenn Ohrlin, the Bunkhouse Chorale, Liz Masterson and Sean Blackburn, The Hays County Gals and Pals, Ed Stabler, Johnny Whelan, Duane Kickinson, Jim Garry, Dick Dillof, and many others. The lineup of performers for the 1997 event is still being assembled.

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For more information contact Lillian Turner at (307-578-4007.)

End of Trail

Norco, California, will host the nation's oldest and largest cowboy action shooting competition and wild west festival, April 24-27.

Colt's End of Trail cowboy shooting competition and Wild West Jubilee is in its sixteenth year and draws more than 400 authentically dressed competitors from around the world to vie for the world championship of cowboy action shooting. The burgeoning sport is dedicated to preserving the history of the Old West. End of Trail is also a celebration of the cowboy lifestyle, surrounded by a three-day festival open to the public and featuring activities for the entire family. More than 12,500 spectators attended last year's event.

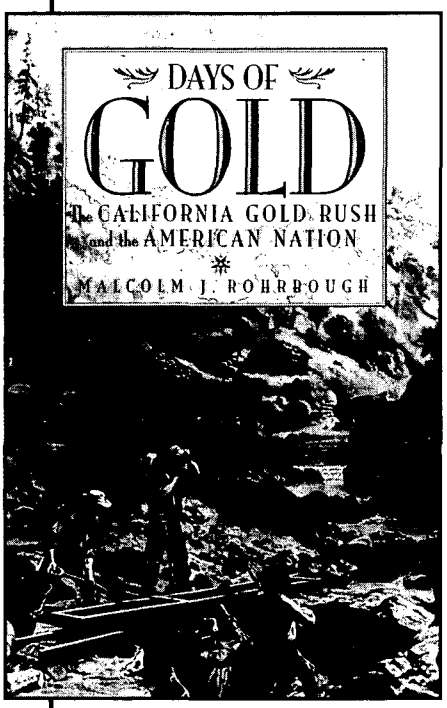
A wild west encampment spread across thirty acres on a wooded lakeside site in the rustic Prado Dam recreation area, End of Trail will also feature a full schedule of continuous live entertainment, including a wild west show in the tradition of Buffalo Bill. Other events scheduled include historical reenactments and educational seminars, mounted horse events, cowboy poetry, stunt shows, costume contests, a cavalry encampment, trick roping, a chuck wagon cooking contest and for the kids, pony rides, a petting zoo, and crafts and games.

Roy Rogers and Dale Evans' Happy Trails Children's Foundation for abused children was the charity beneficiary of End of Trail '96. End of Trail has raised more than $120,000 for children's charities since 1989.

Hours for End of Trail are 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM daily. Admission is $9.00 per person per day. Children twelve and under are admitted free.

Ron Wolfson

An End of Trail gunman competes in a mounted shooting contest.



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Great Train Robberies

Historic recreations of daring Great Train robberies of the 1880s will occur on the weekends of April 5-6, and 12-13, at Santa Cruz County California's Roaring Camp.

The camp maintains its own narrow-gauge railroad and visitors will be able to ride authentic antique 1880s steam trains and experience the great train robberies first hand.

For more information contact Jeanette Guire at 408-335-4484.

Smithsonian's Barn Again

The Smithsonian Institution's traveling exhibition on barns entitled "Barn Again: Celebrating an American Icon," will tour eight states in 1997.

The exhibition is intended to give visitors new ways to consider the familiar icon of the American barn, and features architectural models, photographs, popular culture objects, and period advertisements.

Many of the barns in the exhibit have been rendered obsolete by modern industrial farming, and the enormous machinery it requires. These barns are slowly disappearing from the rural American landscape.

The traveling exhibit will visit sites in Alabama, Georgia, Oregon, Utah, Ohio, West Virginia, Illinois, and Missouri. There are four copies of the exhibit allowing it to be in four states simultaneously. For information on when the exhibit will be in a state near you call (202) 357-2700 or visit them on the Internet at http://www.si.edu/sites.

Western Roundup is a report on places to go and things to see associated with the history of the Old West. Submissions are welcome. Information on scheduled events should be submitted at least four months prior to the event. Items on historic places are also welcome. Send information including photos to: Western Roundup, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076.

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Searching for the family of John Wesley Hardin

Guthrie

Vina "Guthrie" Garrett died in 1903 during childbirth.

She is buried near Detroit, Red River County, Texas. Anyone knowing the location of this grave or any information about the Guthrie family, please contact me.—**Lee Hadaway, PO Box 457, Carbon, Texas 76435.**

Hardin

Texas outlaw John Wesley Hardin had a great deal of kinfolk and spent much of his time on the run, staying with one set of family or another.

There were many family members he named in his book that he either rode or stayed with.

Nearly all of these branches may still have family stories about his visits. As a child I met several people who remembered their parents telling such stories and in fact, my wife's grandfather, John Wesley Tracy (1869-1957), was a second cousin to Hardin. He told the story that as a child he "helped Hardin put on shooting exhibits for family and neighbors." Tracy was also a "favorite" of Hardin's because they shared the name John Wesley.

Names of some relatives not mentioned in Hardin's book would be Tracy, Manor, Hickman, Roberson, Kurkendall, Golden, Piliot, Young, Stockton, and many others. Some places not mentioned were Colleta Community, French Settlement, Golden Community, and Willow Creek, Texas.

I would certainly like to hear from anyone with a John Wesley Hardin story, family or otherwise.—**Alan Richmond, PO Box 812, Yorktown, Texas 78164.**

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient. Please print or type your query and limit letters to 150 words or less. Photos are welcome. Send all letters to Trails Grown Dim, PO Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to above is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

Billy the Kid

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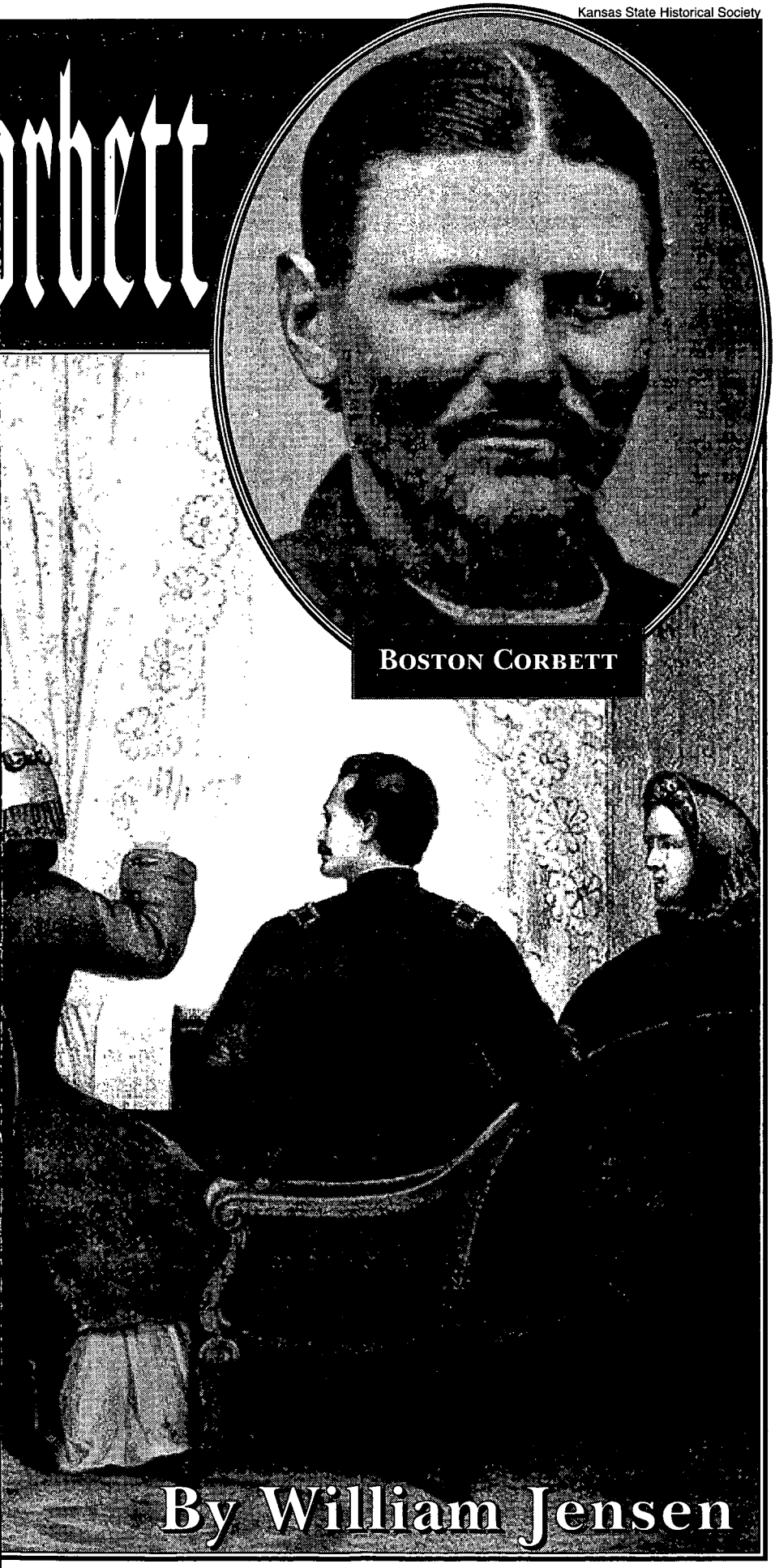
rbett
BOSTON CORBETT
By William Jensen

"I prayed, 'O, Lord, lay not innocent blood to our charge, but bring the guilty speedily to punishment.' Afterward when the assassin lay at my feet, a wounded man, and I saw the bullet had taken effect about an inch back of the ear, and I remembered that Mr. Lincoln was wounded about the same part of the head, I said: 'What a God we have!'"—Boston Corbett

The assassination of Abraham Lincoln, like many infamous events in history, created an odd cast of characters who played out the drama of a national tragedy. But unlike the well–known characters of John W. Booth and Dr. Samuel Mudd, little is known about the figure who took Booth's life before he went to trial. Boston Corbett, never achieving a lengthy biography, has rather been forever chained to the historical footnote of: "Self-castrated, religious zealot." While this description is accurate, there is a lot more to be said of the man who spent his life devoted to God, and left his legacy as the avenger of a president.

Born in 1832 in London, England, Thomas P. Corbett moved to Troy, New York, at the age of seven. Learning the trade of hatmaker, Corbett lived in Albany, New York, and Danbury, Connecticut, before settling in New York with his new wife. But on the evening he was ready to begin a family, it was taken away from him when his wife and unborn daughter died in childbirth.

Devastated, Corbett led the life of a wandering drunkard until he staggered within earshot of a street evangelist in Boston. Corbett became a new man on August 29, 1858, baptized by Methodist Episcopal Church minister Rich E. Pope. In recognition of the city that marked his salvation, Corbett took the name Boston.

As the Boston streets delivered Corbett religion, they also delivered him his more memorable attribute, or lack thereof. One night in Boston, as Corbett was practicing some street preaching of his own, he was ogled over by two prostitutes. Guilty of his reaction to the night-

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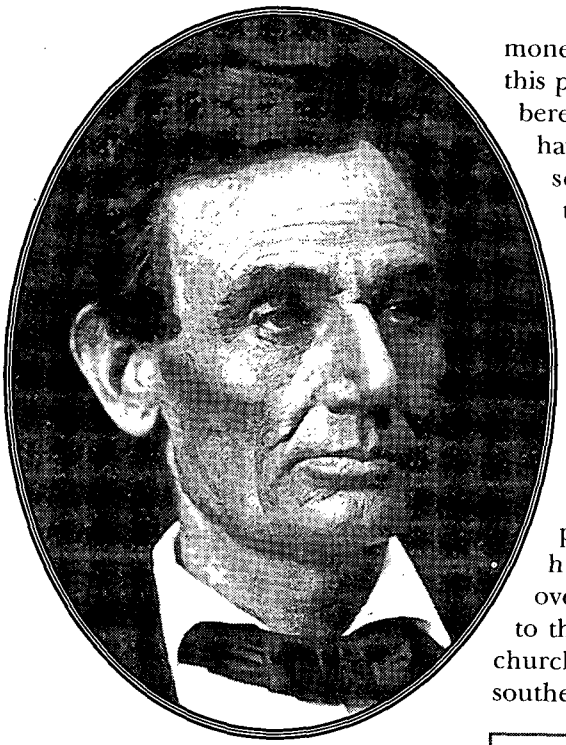


Abraham Lincoln

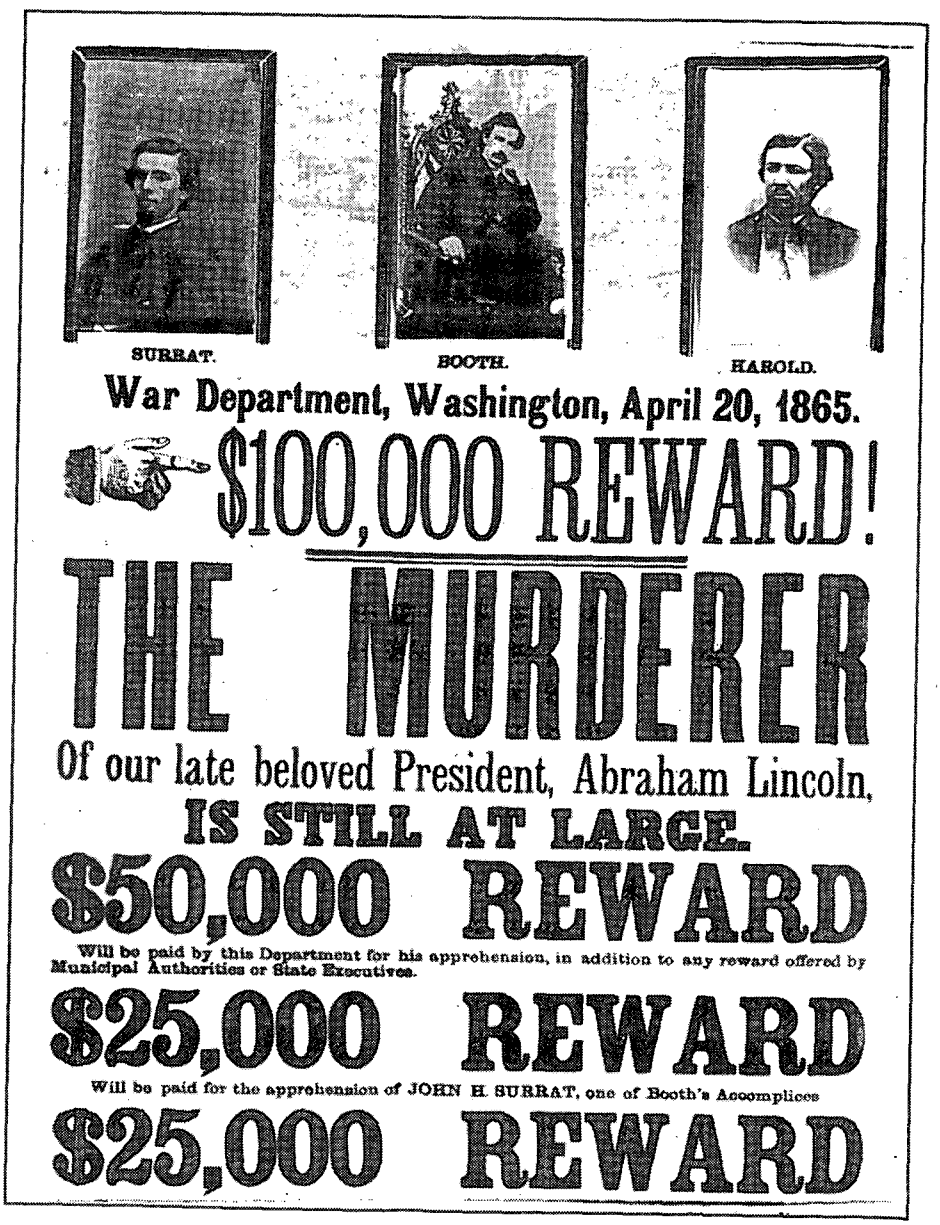
walkers, Corbett ran home to remove himself of the appendage that he believed was the cause of his impure thoughts. He would spend a month in Massachusetts General Hospital nursing his wound in the summer of 1858.

The "self-castrated, religious zealot" was a short, dark man. Standing only five and one-half feet tall, Corbett's most distinguishing features were his long, dark hair, which he wore in the popular image of Jesus Christ, and his dark, piercing eyes. On the pyhsical description of Corbett, a pension deposition read: "complexion, dark; hair, dark; eyes, black." But this man, whose outer appearance was shrouded in darkness, was inside as pure as snow.

The many homeless of the cities of the east coast provided individual missionary work for Corbett. J.H. Brown, his employer in New York, remembers him leading "a very singular life." Corbett would find some "poor devil" on the street and take him into his home, where he would feed and clothe him. When he got his guest in good enough shape, he would tell him to go so that he could make room for another. Corbett, who wasn't making much money at the time, would continue this process until, as Brown remembered, "the poor fellow would not have any decent clothes for himself." While other men spent their nights in the taverns, Corbett spent his evenings saving lost souls.

Corbett preached up and down the eastern seaboard for a short time, finishing hats along the way to make a living. When the Civil War broke out, he eagerly enlisted. Anxious of the prospect of fighting slavery, which he greatly opposed, the overzealous Corbett exclaimed to the ladies of his New York City church that when he encounters a southern soldier on the battlefield, "I will say to them, 'God have mercy on your souls'—then pop them off." Corbett enrolled in the Twelfth New York Cavalry on April 19, 1861, and quickly built a reputation as a Bible thumper. In Franklin Square, New York, Corbett broke ranks to admonish Colonel Butterfield for swearing at the regiment. This act, along with many others, landed Corbett in the guardhouse but did nothing to dampen his religious spirit. He sang religious hymns throughout each night until he was released.

As much as Corbett was an eccentric in the barracks, he was fearless on the battlefield. He reenlisted three times. In June of 1864, Corbett and the Sixteenth New York Cavalry were cornered by Confed-



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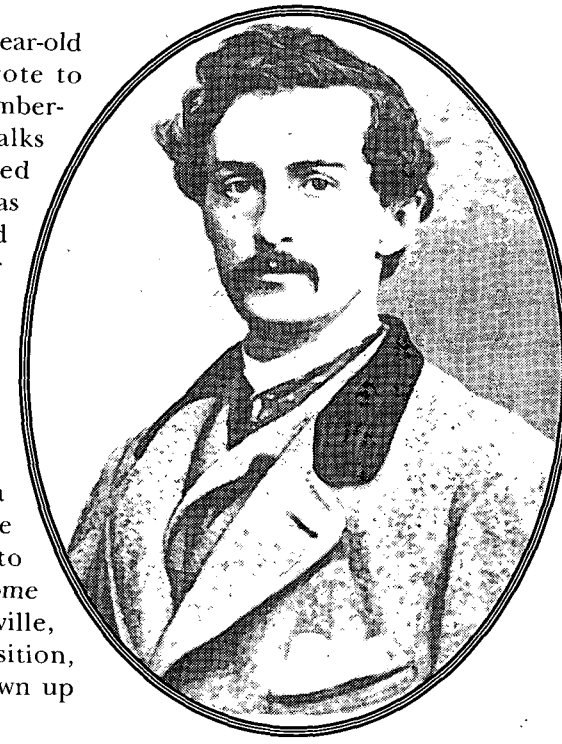
erate Colonel Mosby at Culpepper Court House. Corbett fought fiercely until both his companions and his ammunition, ran out. With "God by his side," Corbett picked up a club to ward off his foes in hand-to-hand combat. He was ultimately captured. Appreciating Corbett's bravery, Mosby chose not to send his adversary to the grave, but rather deliver him to the South's closest accommodations to hell, Andersonville.

While Andersonville was considered a death sentence by many because of its incessant disease and high death rate, it was for Corbett a glorious opportunity to save souls. He now had the captive audience he had yearned for and converted many men during his stay. Ephraim W. Beidelman, an eighteen-year-old corporal from Florida, wrote to Corbett after the war, remembering, "I used to have long talks with you and always attended your prayer meetings and was converted by your honest and good work you done their [sic]." Although Corbett focused much of his attention on God in prison, he did not lose his fighting spirit and actually escaped, only to be recaptured quickly.

Corbett spent three and a half months in Andersonville before being transferred to Millen, Georgia. He had become extremely sick in Andersonville, stating in his pension deposition, "My right knee being so drawn up from the effects of Scurvy that I was compelled to go on crutches at the time." Due to his sickness, Corbett was exchanged after two weeks in Millen, and was sent to the Naval Academy Hospital at Annapolis. He rejoined his regiment in January 1865, in time to take his place in the footnotes of history that spring.



John Wilkes Booth

Leaping from the presidential box after depositing a single bullet into the skull of President Lincoln, John Wilkes Booth caught his spur on a Union flag drapery and fell awkwardly onto the stage below. Despite suffering a broken leg, Booth limped off the stage unaccosted. He mounted his horse and rode out of Washing-ton, commencing a ten-day manhunt.

While Booth was navigating through the thick Virginia landscape, Corbett was leading a prayer at Wesley Chapel. "O, Lord, lay not innocent blood to our charge, but bring the guilty speedily to punishment," Corbett pleaded. He realized that he perhaps could be the instrument in the fulfillment of this prayer when a Captain Baker assembled soldiers on parade ground and asked for twenty-five volunteers to accompany him on a "dangerous mission." Corbett was the first to

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A ticket for the International Exhibition in Philadelphia, featuring Boston Corbett.

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step forward.

The posse escorted two Secret Service agents to Virginia, where they had received a tip as to Booth's whereabouts. They arrived at Garret's farm and surrounded a tobacco barn where Booth and his slow-witted accomplice, David Herold, were hiding.

After a long round of negotiations with the captives, Lieutenant Doherty, Corbett's commander, directed his saddle-sore men to dismount and take positions on the perimeter of the barn. Orders were given that Booth was to be taken alive. Herold, apparently losing his nerve, exited the barn, but Booth remained, stalling for time, embroiled in a vain attempt to use his eloquence to talk his way out. The investigators, weary of creating a circus event in which southern sympathizers may be attracted to the barn to rally around Booth, decided that he had to be apprehended quickly. Brush was piled along the outer walls of the barn, and the Union soldiers set it on fire.

As the fledgling fire began to gain strength, Corbett anxiously watched Booth through a large crack in the barn. He then received his orders, not from his military leaders, but from his ultimate commanding officer.

With "God almighty directing" him, Corbett raised his weapon and fired a shot into the flames. Baker and Conger immediately ran into the barn to find Booth slumped on the floor amidst the burning embers. His wound was behind his right ear, in almost the exact location of Lincoln's wound. Corbett would later utilize the similarity as proof that his act was a product of divine providence. Lincoln's assassin was dragged out of the barn, asked to see his hands, proclaimed "useless, useless," and fell into history.

Corbett meanwhile, was ready to relieve Booth of his place on the nation's center stage. Always sharing the responsibility of his act with God, Corbett was not punished, but only received $1,653.85 of the reward money for the capture of Booth, with the lion's share of the $50,000 going to the chief investigators. There are reports that Corbett did not mind, however, as he told the *New York Tribune* that he would have liked to just keep his saddle-horse from the war.

With a pony, some cash, and a divine guided shot, Corbett left the army to return to finishing hats and saving an occasional soul.

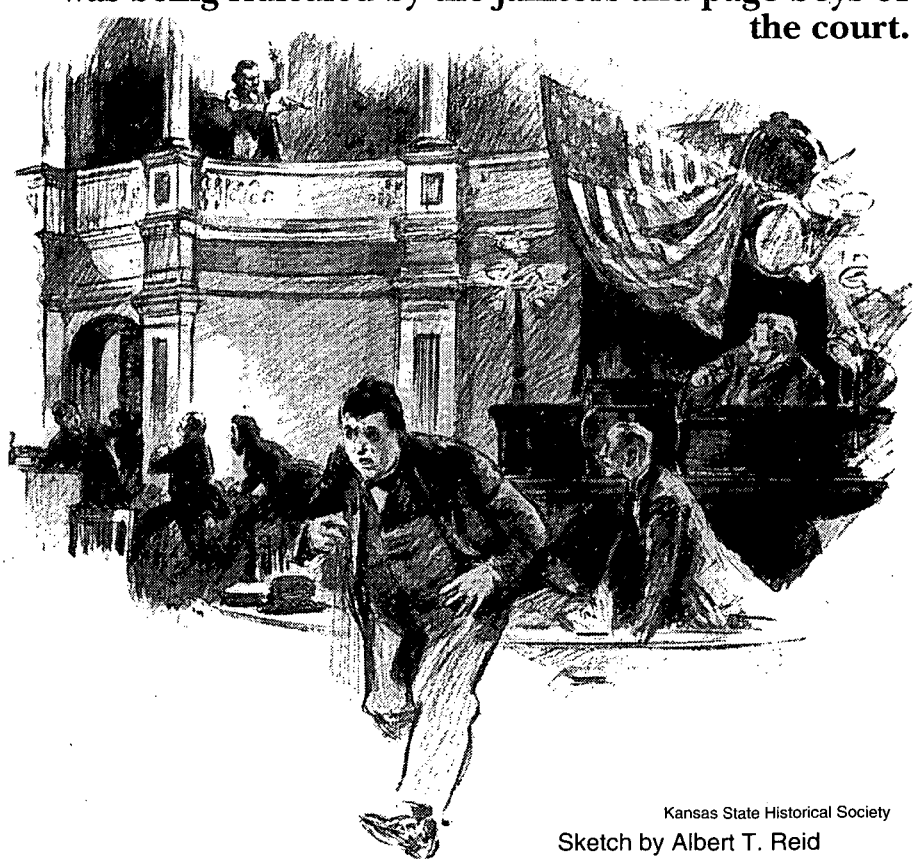
He returned to New York and resumed his hat finishing trade on Nassan Street in Manhattan and then in Brooklyn. From 1869 to 1878, he operated a mission church in Camden, New Jersey

Life, however, did not go on as usual for Corbett. Being the avenger of Lincoln had its share of perks. Corbett was besieged with requests for speaking engagements to recount the story of his confrontation with Booth. His autograph was sought by collectors, and the Western Andersonville Survivors Association offered him "Honorary Life membership free of any charge." Even the caretakers of Abraham Lincoln's former home in Springfield, Illinois, which was being turned into a memorial, requested a "detailed statement" of the capture of Booth "from the one who had the honor of shooting him."

But with as many admirers as Corbett had, there were also his detractors. Some reports claimed that he was a marked man on the East coast, insulted wherever he went in public. Despised by the South for killing their hero and despised by high government officials for denying them a trial, Corbett was said to have been a hated man. Whatever the reason, Corbett fled the east coast in 1878 to homestead in Concordia, Kansas.

Corbett spent his time in Kansas farming and doing odd jobs but requested a pension from the government due to his injuries suffered as a result of Andersonville. "I don't think I have been able to earn $20,"

No one is quite sure as to what pushed Corbett over the edge. The *Kansas City Star* reported that Corbett was being ridiculed by the janitors and page boys of the court.



Kansas State Historical Society
Sketch by Albert T. Reid

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wrote Corbett to the government, "during the whole time from 1877 to 1882 by manual labor." He would preside over church from the back of the room, always armed with his two pistols, not by his side, but in his boots. He was never seen unarmed.

In 1886 The Grand Army of the Republic secured him a position of assistant doorkeeper of the Kansas house of representatives in Topeka. Corbett served his post well, until an episode in February of the next year sealed his fate for good.

During a session, Corbett locked the doors and began shooting his pistols wildly at the room. Diving behind wastebaskets and desks, no legislator was hit. God must not have been guiding his aim as he was in Virginia. Corbett was ultimately subdued and thrown in jail.

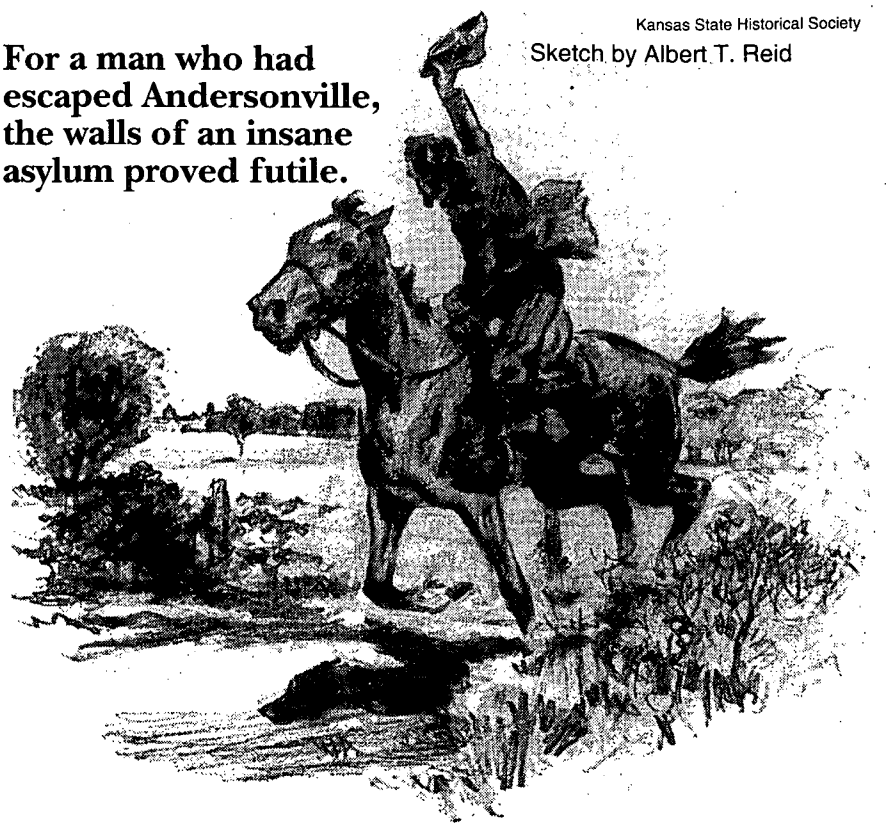
No one is quite sure as to what pushed Corbett over the edge. The *Kansas City Star* reported that Corbett was being ridiculed by the janitors and page boys of the court. Perhaps he was angry at all the reports of John Wilkes Booth sightings cropping up in newspapers at the time. Corbett was declared insane and sent to the state insane asylum at Topeka.

For a man who had escaped Andersonville, the walls of an insane asylum proved futile. Snatching a horse tied up near the grounds of the asylum, Corbett escaped on May 26, 1888.

After bolting from the asylum, there are conflicting stories as to where Corbett went next. One tale has him traveling to Neodosha, Kansas, to call on Richard Thatcher, a school principal and friend of Corbett's from his stay at Andersonville. According to Thatcher's daughter, Corbett stayed in Neodosha for two days before letting his horse go and boarding a train to Mexico. Although the daughter claimed to have accompanied Corbett to the station on June 30, 1888, records show no tickets to Mexico were purchased on that date.

Another tale has Corbett receiving money and a pony in Neodosha from I.S. Deford and his son, Harvey. Deford supposedly received a postcard some time later from Corbett at the Mexican border. Regardless of which story is true, Corbett was never seen again in Kansas.

For a man who had escaped Andersonville, the walls of an insane asylum proved futile.



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Sketch by Albert T. Reid

Corbett had once told a friend that if he were to die unexpectantly, he wanted all of his worldly possessions (which probably included a few books, furniture, and weapons) to be donated to mission work in Africa. He supposedly had dug his own grave and left instructions to be buried, not in a casket but wrapped in a new army blanket.

History will never know if Corbett got his new blanket. It is presumed that the avenger of Lincoln died in Mexico, anonymous.

But legends such as his do not die easily, neither does the thirst for a hearty government pension. In 1905, a man named J.B. Corbett caused a stir by claiming that he was the real Boston Corbett, eligible for his government pension as well as his notoriety. Standing seven and a half inches taller than the original Corbett, J.B. Corbett gave many inconsistent answers to investigators regarding the known past of the original Corbett. Claiming, among other things, that a bite from a rabid wolf caused him to give incorrect information about his past, the impostor was sentenced to three years in prison for his charade.

Historians today are split as to whether Corbett fired the fatal shot which spelled Booth. Suicide is often mentioned as the most likely scenario, affording Booth, ever the actor, the opportunity to choose his own fate. Corbett is written off as even more of a nutcase than he was as Booth's killer.

In Concordia, Kansas, below two six-guns imbedded in stone, is a plaque that reads "Home of Boston Corbett, Who as a Soldier shot John Wilkes Booth, the Assassin of President Lincoln." In the minds of those who erected this monument, there was no doubt as to whether Corbett actually shot Booth. The sponsors of the monument, the young men of Boy Scout Troop 31, believed in their hometown hero and gave him his due honor as "The President's Avenger."

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The Lost Gold of La Tules

By Ken Weinman

Illustrations by Adam Wallenta

Some just came there to watch the beautiful red-haired, green-eyed lady deal a Spanish card game called "monte."

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Somewhere in the hills between the towns of Santa Fe and Las Vegas, New Mexico, lies a cache of gold coins worth approximately three million dollars at today's prices. The money had belonged to one of the most famous women of the Old West, and was lost while being shipped by mule train from Santa Fe to Saint Louis, Missouri.

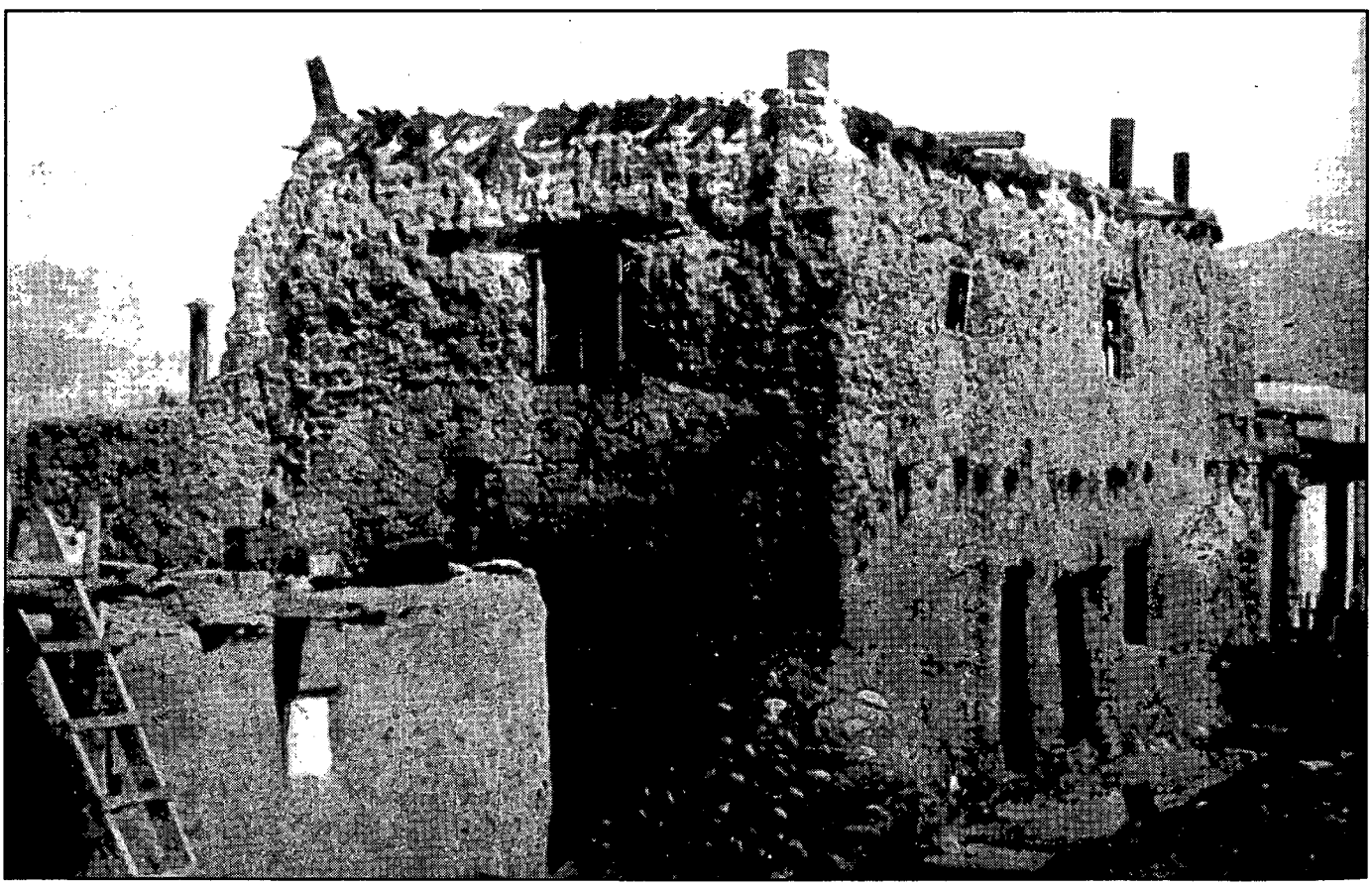
Her name was Doña Maria Gertrudis Barcelo, and she was known as Santa Fe's gambling lady. Everyone knew her as La Tules, and her fame as a monte dealer and gambling hall owner was well-known throughout the American West. People from all walks of life visited her casino. Their lot consisted of soldiers, prospectors, miners, mountain men, politicians, and socialites. They all came to try their luck at gaming tables. Some just came there to watch the beautiful red-haired, green-eyed lady deal a Spanish card game called "monte."

La Tules purchased a license to operate in public. She then rented tables to various dealers who set up banks. Many times, three or four tables would be in operation in the same room at the same time. Thousands of dollars often changed hands in a single evening.

Crowds of people would gather around the monte tables in La Tules' casino each evening. The banker sat behind the table and dealt the cards. Each table was covered with a red or green cloth that was divided into four equal squares. In the game of monte, chance has more to do with winning and losing than any other game. Only forty cards were used: the eights, nines, and tens were removed from the deck. One card was dealt into each square. The players then bet various sums of money on their favorite card. More cards were then dealt by the dealer, and whoever paired up his card first won the game. While the cards were being dealt, the players' eyes and minds were fixed intently on the game. A breathless silence remained until the results were known, the winners collecting their bets.

La Tules had an uncanny skill at monte, and she was known as the most expert monte dealer in the territory. She knew her customers betting habits and roughly where the matching cards were located in the deck. Her rags to riches story is truly amazing. Santa Fe in the mid 1800s was the crossroads of trails from all four directions, and everyone coming there eventually met at Doña's establishment. Most all the men who went there were armed, and shootouts and killings were common.

Gambling, like boxing and bulldogging, were a man's job; but in the Old West, all women were an attraction. Gambling hall owners knew this, and they used women to attract customers to their tables. Using her charm and beauty to best advantage, La Tules built up a large following, and in a few years' time she had accumulated enough capi-



Author's Photo

The oldest house in the United States is in Santa Fe and is still standing. It was built in 1610 when New Mexico was called "The Viceroyalty of New Spain."

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tal to buy her own gambling hall.

Her gambling establishment was a city block long, and was located at San Francisco Street and Burro Alley. Using her newly amassed riches, La Tules renovated the old building. She furnished it with fine carpets from Europe, glass mirrors, crystal chandeliers, and imported furniture, all brought across the Santa Fe Trail by wagon train from St. Louis, Missouri.

By the time of the American occupation of New Mexico in 1847, La Tules was becoming very rich. She traveled around Santa Fe and nearby villages in her own upholstered carriage. She also had her own armed guards who escorted her wherever she went. Her personal fortune continued to grow, and Ms. Barcelo became worried that her accumulated wealth might attract the local criminal element if she continued to keep it on her property. Since there were no reputable banks in Santa Fe or in Taos, she decided to send her money out to banks in St. Louis and New York.

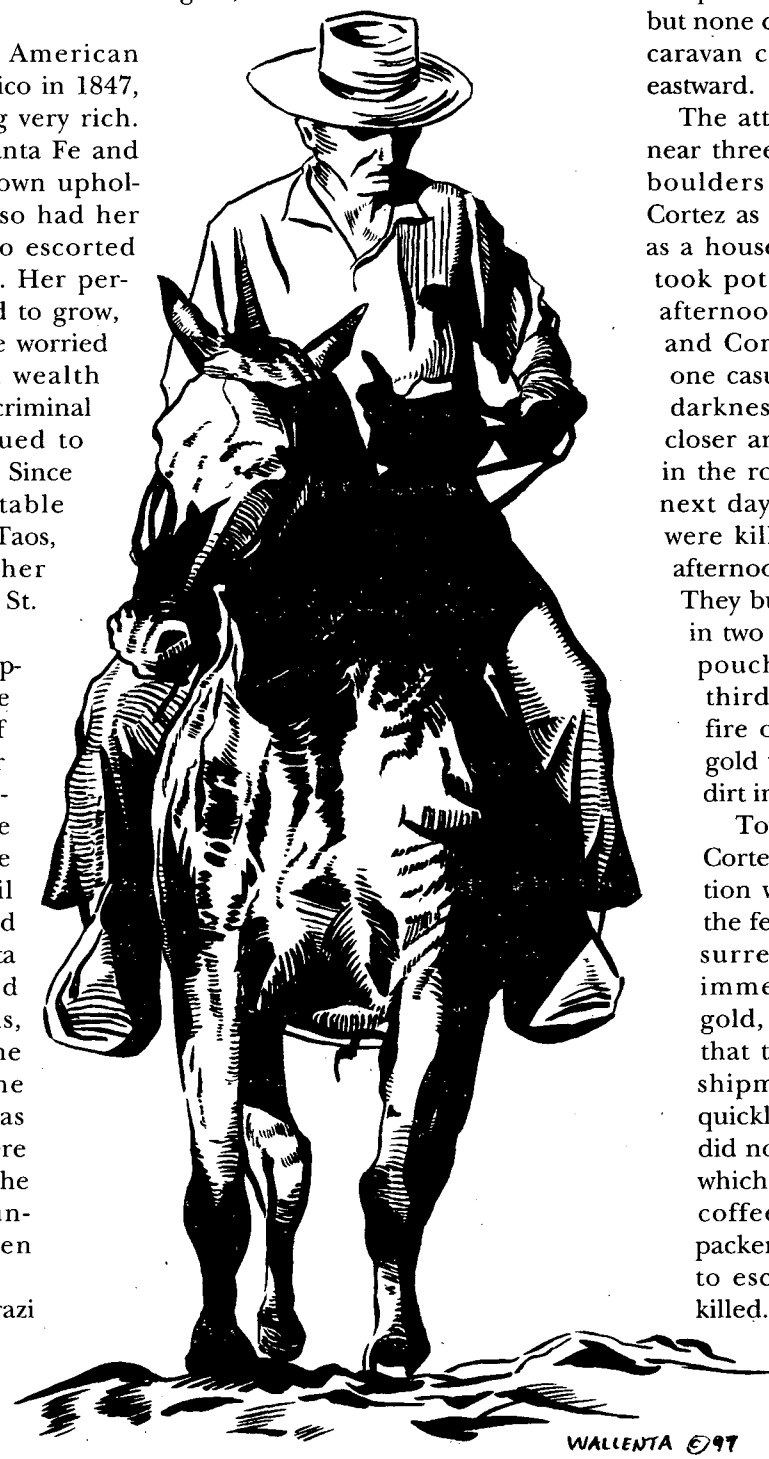
For one particular shipment she contracted the local transport firm of Cortez and DiGrazi. For safety reasons the company decided not to use the well-known Santa Fe Trail but instead a trail through the rugged mountains north of Santa Fe. After having passed through the mountains, they planned to join the Santa Fe Trail near the present-day town of Las Vegas, New Mexico. Here the land levels out, and the trail goes through hundreds of miles of open prairie grassland.

The Cortez and DiGrazi caravan departed Santa Fe at first light while the town still slept. Packed carefully on their mules was La Tules' $150,000 in gold coins. They made good time throughout the morning, but shortly after noon, Cortez noticed that they were being followed by a small group of horsemen. Fearing that they were bandits out to seize the gold, Cortez had his men dismount and prepare a hot reception for them, but the cloud of dust in the distance slowly disappeared.

Cortez and his men remounted and continued on. They saw no sign of the horsemen throughout the rest of the day. Just before dark, they saw the dust cloud again off in the distance. They hastily made camp and prepared for an attack, but none came, and at dawn the tiny caravan continued on its journey eastward.

The attack finally came at noon near three large rocks. One of the boulders was later described by Cortez as being about half as large as a house. Digging in, both sides took pot shots at each other all afternoon and into the evening, and Cortez's men suffered only one casualty. Under the cover of darkness, the bandits moved in closer and positioned themselves in the rocks above the train. The next day, three of Cortez's men were killed, and during the late afternoon they dug three graves. They buried the three dead men in two of the graves and hid the pouches of gold coins in the third one. They then built a fire over the pit in which the gold was hidden, and shoveled dirt in piles over the other two.

Towards the end of the day, Cortez realized that their situation was hopeless, and he and the few men that were still alive surrendered. The bandits immediately demanded the gold, but were told by Cortez that there wasn't gold on this shipment. The angry bandits quickly searched the camp, but did not check under the fire on which Cortez now had a pot of coffee brewing. A few of the packers made a break and tried to escape, but were shot and killed. The next day only Cortez



Late one evening while the bandits were sleeping, Cortez stole a horse from them and escaped.

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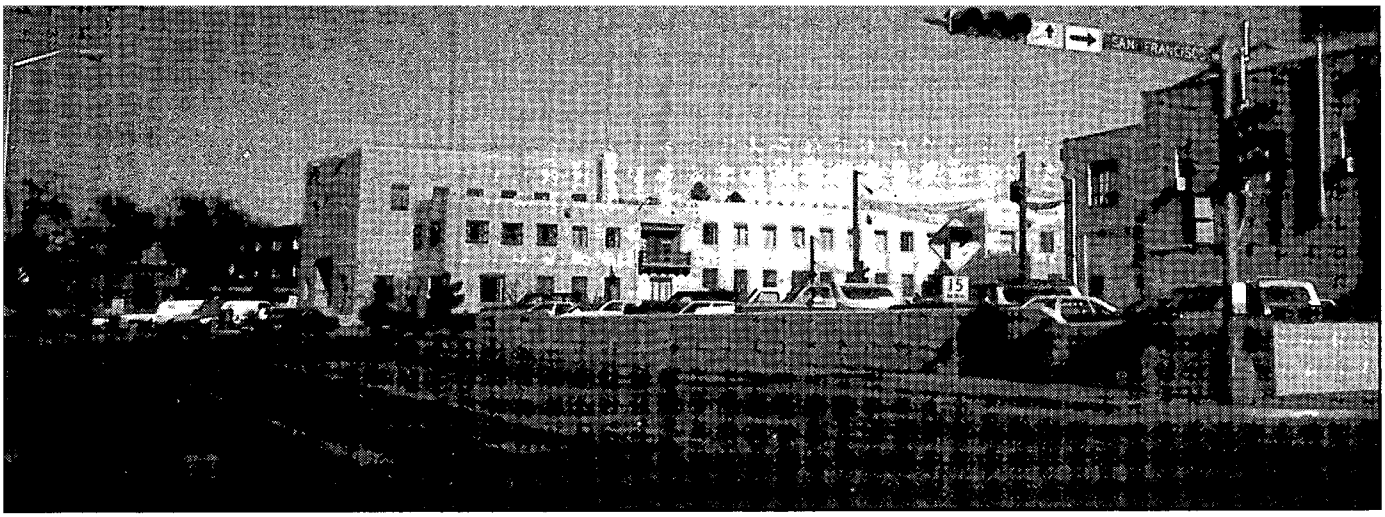

Author's photo

La Tules built her original casino on the corners of Burro Alley and San Francisco streets. The Santa Fe courthouse stands there today.

remained alive. He would be the only survivor to testify later as to the details of the crime.

The bandits were undecided about what to do with Cortez. If he was lying about the gold and they killed him, they would probably never find it. So they decided to leave the area and head back to old Mexico. They took Cortez with them, hoping that he would tell them where the gold coins were hidden. They traveled fast and light, and were soon deep in Mexican territory. They questioned Cortez continually about the gold, but he stuck to his original story that there wasn't any.

Now that they were back in their home territory, the bandits became more relaxed and paid less attention to Cortez. Late one evening while the bandits were sleeping, Cortez stole a horse from them and escaped. The country was totally unfamiliar, and he was completely lost. He rode at night and hid out by day, and he eventually reached what he thought to be the Rio Grande.

He followed it northward, knowing that it would take him to Santa Fe, a distance of over 400 miles. It took Cortez over three months to return. When he finally reached Santa Fe, he was emaciated from a lack of good food and he could hardly walk or talk. Two men found him lying unconscious along the river bank.

Babbling in delirium, Cortez told officials about what had happened to him and his men, and he drew them a crude map of the treasure area, to the best of his recollection. His condition was beyond medical help and he died a few days later. When La Tules was informed about the fate of her gold shipment, she immediately sent some men out to recover it. When the search party failed to return after a few days, she sent another heavily armed group out to look for the first one. They found that the first group had all been killed by Indians, scalped, and robbed of their clothing, food, and weapons. The map drawn by Cortez had also disappeared. Several searches have since been made to find the location of the three big rocks, but as far as it is known, no one has ever found them or the buried gold coins.

La Tules had everything in life that she wanted except good health. Money couldn't buy that, and she died of a lingering illness in February 1852, at the age of forty-seven. She had an elaborate funeral which cost her estate $1,600. She was buried with the highest honors of the Catholic church, and the bishop of Santa Fe presided over the funeral service.

Hundreds of admirers attended her funeral and filed by her coffin to pay their respects. La Tules left her entire estate to her sister, a brother, and two stepdaughters. During the 1920s, the city of Santa Fe tore down the building where La Tules had her casino, and on that spot they built the county courthouse. It is still located there today.

Author Ruth Laughlin acquired the only two items left today that were known to belong to La Tules: an ox-hide money chest and a monte table. But $150,000 in gold coins are still waiting to be found, somewhere in the Southwest.

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WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE

REWARDS IN THE FRONTIER WEST

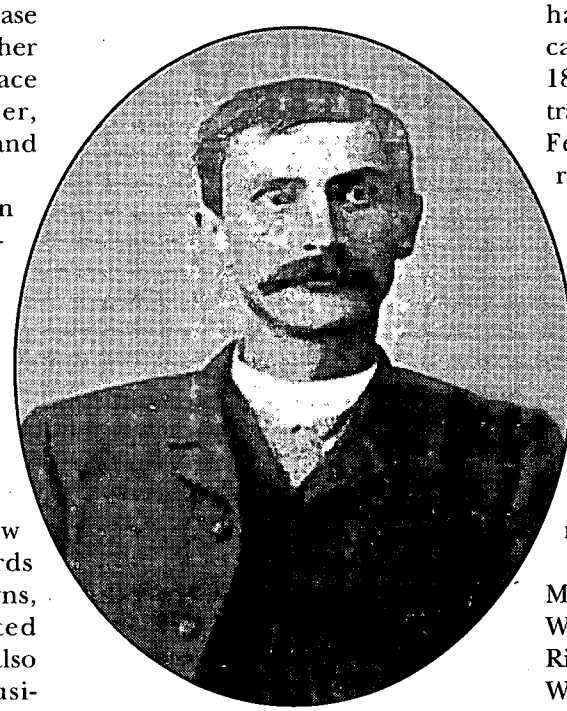
BY ALLEN P. BRISTOW

American law enforcement was particularly challenged in the post-Civil War period by massive westward migration. Communities in the West developed rapidly and their inhabitants were largely transient. The population surge was predominately male, unstable, adventurous, and their criminal tendencies were stimulated by the ease with which they could flee to other areas without fear of arrest. Peace officers were limited in number, lacked training or experience, and had a provincial attitude.

The need to interest officers in arresting an outlaw who committed a crime in another area was critical. Unfortunately the prevailing attitude was, "If he did it there, let them chase him down." However, one effective way was found to encourage the arrest of fugitive outlaws: reward money.

While the notion had a slow beginning, by the 1880s rewards were commonly offered by towns, counties, states, and the United States government. They were also offered by banks, railways, businesses, and individuals. Rewards were publicized by newspaper ads and painted signs, but the most common method was the poster, sometimes called a flier or dodger. It usually contained the name, description, and crime of the outlaw, the source and amount of the reward, and the specific requirements which must be met to earn payment.

Most of what we know about rewards in the early West comes as a result of disputes over payment. Cheating and deceit seem to have been prevalent. There were many attempts to avoid paying reward claims once the outlaw was safely in custody. In fairness, there were as many attempts to falsely collect rewards on the part of peace officers, posse members, and private citizens.



Western Publications

Pat Garrett

One such example concerns two of the most legendary characters in the West, Billy the Kid and Sheriff Pat Garrett. Governor Lew Wallace had posted a $500 reward for the capture of the Kid. In December 1880, Garrett made that arrest and transported Billy to the jail at Santa Fe. Garrett then applied for the reward. Governor Wallace had left New Mexico on a routine trip, and the acting governor, William G. Ritch, refused to pay the reward on the grounds that Garrett had not complied with certain technicalities. Garrett's only recourse was with the courts. Later, local citizens were so incensed at his treatment that they began to collect a fund to replace the denied reward.

A second example occurred in May 1898. An outlaw named Joe Walker was pursued in the Green River area of Utah by Sheriff Charles W. Allred and his posse. Also at large in the same general area, and posted with a generous reward, was the outlaw Butch Cassidy. Allred learned that Walker had joined several other possible outlaws. He also discovered where they were camped. When the posse arrived, a gunfight ensued and two of the suspected outlaws were killed. One was Joe

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Walker and the other had a strong resemblance to Butch Cassidy.

The other two men turned out to be transient cowboys and they told Allred that the second dead man was their companion, Johnny Herring, not Butch Cassidy. But Allred could already smell the reward money. The bodies were taken to Price, Utah. A coroner's inquest was persuaded to identify the second body as Butch Cassidy, and the bodies were quickly buried. Allred applied for the reward, but so many other people felt the body was not Cassidy that an investigation resulted. Herring was then exhumed and properly identified. Allred withdrew his reward claim, but insisted that it had been made in good faith. He was not re-elected.

The collection of a reward offer was simply the enforcement of a contract at law. The notice or poster constituted an offer. When a party complied with the specific conditions, an acceptance was created. If the purpose of the contract was lawful, if it had not been canceled, and if the party performed with full knowledge of, and intent, to collect the reward, then he was entitled to payment.

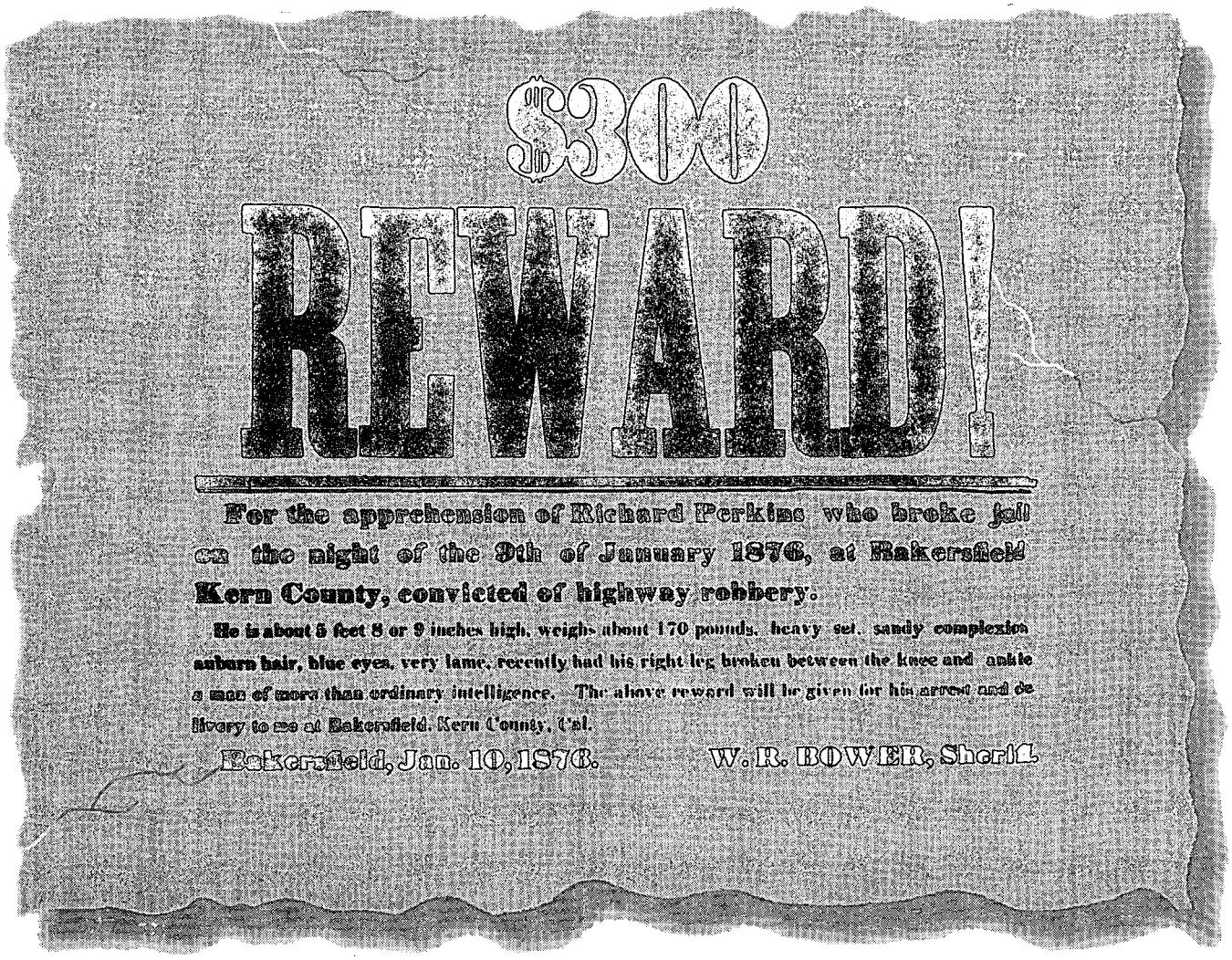
But it was not that simple. The many lawsuits to collect rewards in the West reveal that many technicalities affected payment. Controversy over payment of rewards increased to the point that, by the 1890s, a collection of case law had been established. Some lawyers devoted their full practice to such matters as the volume of fraudulent claims and defaulted offers increased.

A typical example followed a November 1883, New Mexico train robbery and murder which resulted in an $8000 joint reward offer by Wells, Fargo and the Southern Pacific Railway. The offer was made for the arrest of all four of the known robbers, or $2000 for any one of them.

The outlaws were identified as Frank Taggart, Kit Joy, Mitch Lee, and George Cleveland. Harry Whitehill, a former sheriff in the area, located Cleveland at Socorro. He requested the local sheriff, Pete Simmons, to witness the arrest and to receive the prisoner after Whitehill took him into custody.

Joy and Lee were captured by four ranchers who recognized them from reward posters. Taggart was later located by Harry Whitehill who, in the company of his son Harry, Jr., and Grant County Deputy Sheriff John Gilmo, made the arrest.

Within a few months, over a dozen claimants applied for portions of the reward, alleging that



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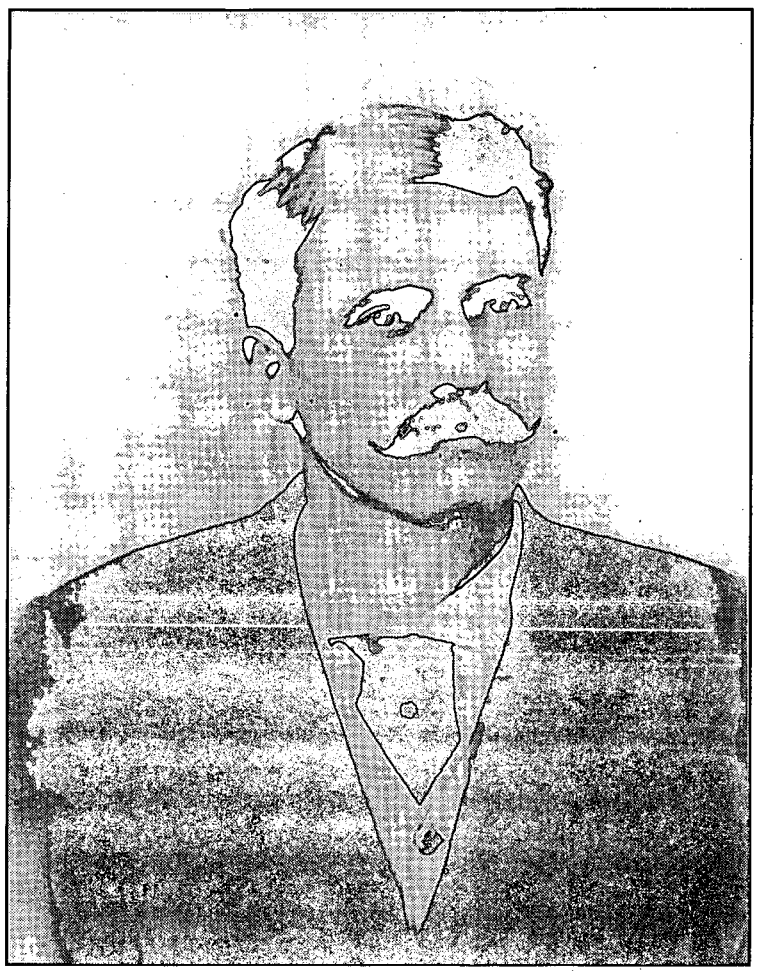
they had participated in the arrests. Attorneys were hired and lawsuits were filed.

The matter finally went to court and the reward was apportioned. For the arrest of Cleveland, Whitehill received $1,320 and for observing and transporting the prisoner Simmons was given $680. Whitehill then was credited with $680 for the arrest of Taggart and Gilmo was given $1,320, while Harry, Jr., was denied anything because he was a minor. The ranchers who captured Joy and Lee were given $1,000 each. All other claims were denied.

To prevent this type of litigation, some peace officers entered into written contracts with those who might be involved in reward arrests. United States Marshal William "Bill" Tilghman provides an example of this arrangement. He was attempting to arrest four robbers on whom Wells, Fargo had set a $1,200 total reward. He entered into a contract with an informant who was to receive $80 per outlaw, leaving Tilgh-man with an uncontested $220 each.

Greed among peace officers for reward money occasionally caused friction between them and reduced cooperation. A glaring instance occurred in the early 1890s following a bank robbery at Roslyn, Washington. A sizable reward was offered for the capture of Matt Warner, who was identified by an informant. Warner was an outlaw who operated in Utah, Idaho, and Washington. He was previously associated with the "Hole in the Wall" gang.

Kittitas County Sheriff McNeil and four deputies, working through the informant, arrested Warner and returned him to the county jail at Ellensburg. McNeil and one of the deputies then tried to force Warner to sign a document stating that only they were principals in the arrest. This was an attempt to cheat the other three deputies of their share. When Warner refused to sign, he was starved and deprived of visits by his wife. The plot was exposed during a an escape attempt, and the resulting turmoil was an embarrassment to all peace officers in the area.



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U.S. Marshal and reward collector Bill Tilghman.

This incident, along with many other such cases, eventually caused the states and the federal government to adopt policies which denied rewards to most peace officers. The emerging theory was that they should not additionally profit from performing the tasks for which they were originally hired, particularly acts that were in the scope and course of their regular law enforcement duties.

The use of "Dead or Alive" rewards caused many problems, particularly where the dead outlaw was later revealed to have been innocent, or guilty of a non-capital offense. An interesting example was involved in the murders, trials, and tribulations of the famous Marlow brothers. In 1889 the authorities in Young County, Texas, posted a "Dead Or Alive" reward for Boone Marlow. The poster charged Marlow with the murder of a sheriff, which later was proven to have been accidental. Marlow contacted his former girlfriend while he was hiding out in Indian Territory. The girl told her brother, G.E. Harbolt about Marlow and the reason he fled Texas. G.E. Harbolt learned of the reward and organized a conspiracy to collect it.

Harbolt was afraid to confront Marlow, who was known to be a dangerous adversary, so he arranged for his sister to poison him. When Marlow was safely dead, Harbolt had two other companions shoot Marlow in the head. The trio then turned in the body, swearing that it was self defense during the capture and applied for the reward. When Marlow's relatives claimed the body for burial they became suspicious about the head wounds that did not bleed. An autopsy was conducted which showed massive arsenic poisoning.

The conspirators were paid $1,500 of the reward and were allowed to keep it. However, they were tried for murder, the court holding that it was illegal to poison a man even if he was an outlaw for whom there was a "Dead Or Alive" reward. If Marlow had been resisting arrest when killed, the court

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REWARD!

WELLS, FARGO & Co.'s EXPRESS BOX, on Chinese and Copperopolis Stage, was ROBBED this morning, by one man about two miles from Burns Ferry, (Ruplee's Bridge,) Tuolumne county side, of $600 in coin and gold dust.

For arrest and conviction of the Robber, we will pay $300, and one-fourth of any portion of treasure recovered.

ROBBER described as follows: A Mexican, lightish complexion, rather short and thick set; weight about 150 lbs.; had a mouscache and short growth of beard.

JOHN J. VALENTINE,
General Superintendent.

Dec 1, 1875.

would have acquitted them. Each of the three were sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

As courts began to hold that "Dead or Alive" rewards did not constitute a lawful purpose for a contract, their use diminished. By the turn of the century many states had begun to make this type of reward offer unlawful.

Court decisions helped to establish rules for posting rewards and collecting them. One problem involved the offering of a reward and then withdrawing it. Imagine the frustration of a sheriff who had arrested a person based on a reward poster and then found that the reward had been canceled weeks or months before. If the arrestee was still wanted for the crime, the sheriff was only out his expenses. But if the person had been cleared of the criminal accusations, only the plea that they acted in good faith kept law officers from liability.

The courts ruled that a reward offer could be canceled at any time, but the withdrawal must be in the same manner as it was made, and must receive the same distribution. However, arrests made prior to withdrawal completed the contract, whether or not the arrestee was still wanted for the crime. Additional court decisions held that law officers should assume that a reward had been withdrawn after a reasonable time.

Another rule affecting the collection of rewards delt with outlaws who voluntarily surrendered. If a wanted outlaw, upon whom a reward was posted, surrendered to authorities without direct inducement, threat or coercion, no reward was payable. However, an outlaw who was being actively pursued and who surrendered to save his life, gain food or medical aid, or from exhaustion, created a valid reward situation. The courts were very skeptical in cases where relatives were responsible for the capture of an outlaw, and then claimed the reward. The appearance of fraud and conspiracy often voided payment in such cases.

Consider the "bounty hunter" figure of the West. Such persons existed only in the imagination of the story writers. Granted, there may have been isolated instances where a non-peace officer set out on the track of a fugitive upon whom a reward had been posted, but the expense of the effort, the time involved, and the uncertainty of collecting payment would have made this a very unprofitable occupation.

If the purported bounty hunter did exist, he was more than likely the agent of a bondsman. There was no reward to be won, just a fee to be earned for the apprehension of a defaulter. This situation began when a court set bail for a defendant. Some person came forward

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and paid the bail, usually charging the defendant a high rate of interest. If the defendant fled, the court forfeited the bondsman's money. It was returned to the bondsman only when the defendant was brought back for trial.

Bondsmen were usually too involved with other business or not skilled enough to track down the defaulter. They usually endorsed the bailment documents over to an agent who could then find and seize the defaulter anywhere in the country.

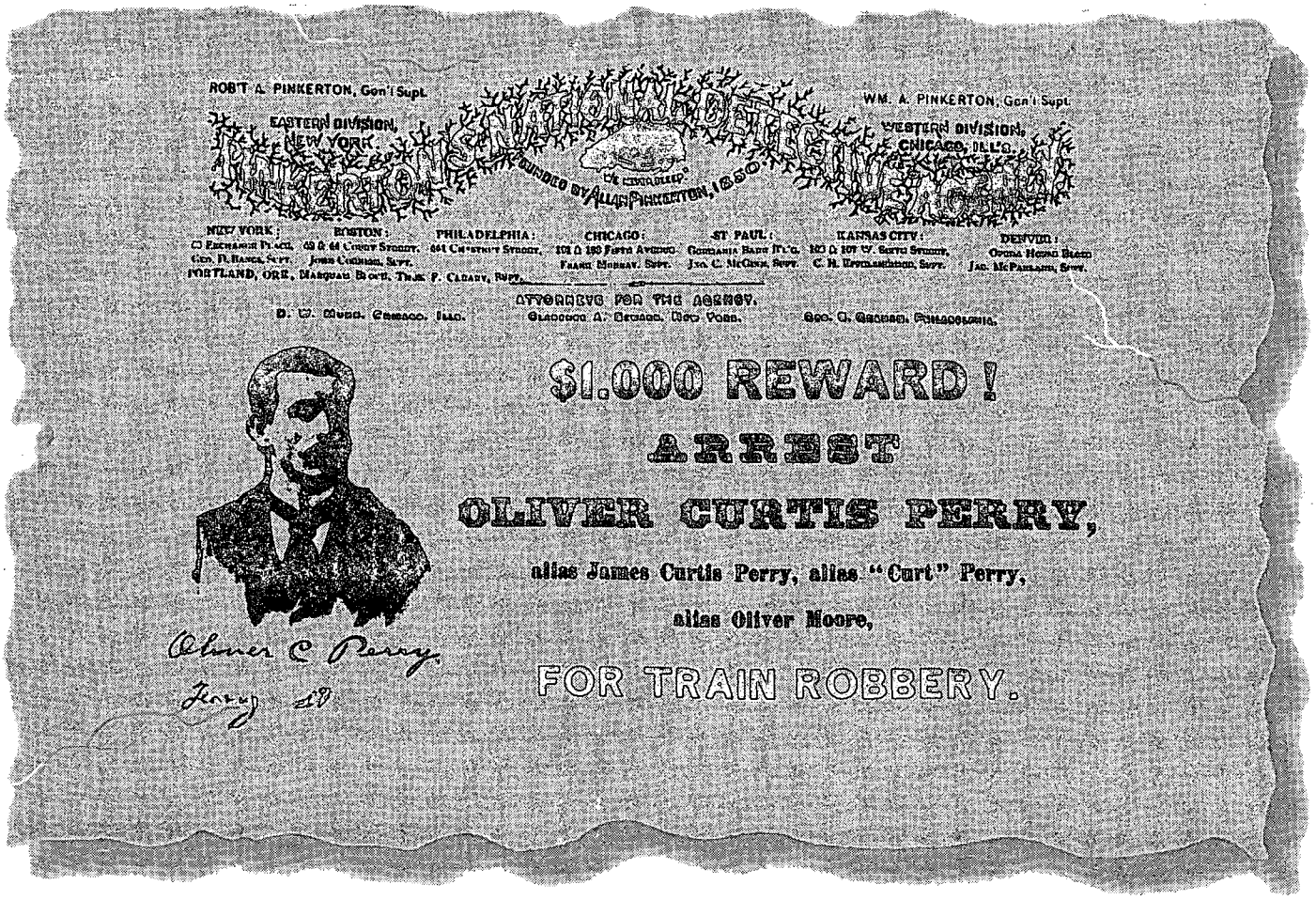
If there were such persons as bounty hunters, they were probably these "body surrender agents," as they came to be called. The low frequency of bail use on the western frontier, the expense involved in tracking down the defaulter, and the fact that the bail was usually secured by a real estate lien, probably resulted in little need for body surrender agents.

As western peace officers became more efficient at catching outlaws, the focus of the reward offers turned from, "...For The Arrest And Conviction Of..." to "...For Information Leading To The Arrest And Conviction Of...." This change permitted a far larger number of reward seekers to participate. It was less risky to furnish information about outlaws than to actually confront and capture them. Also, it was sometimes possible to keep the informant's identity secret.

However, the opportunity for dishonesty on the part of the authorities increased. How easy it was to deny such a reward by alleging that the information provided was already known or not used to effect the capture. Among those who had information relating to a reward offer, and who were aware that the authorities might try to avoid paying it, a system came into use.

These careful informants obtained an attorney, or several reliable witnesses, and approached the authorities with a disclosure document for the signature of the principal law officer. This confirmed what information the authorities held on the outlaw's identity or whereabouts. Then the informant handed them a written document containing the detailed information with which he hoped to win the reward. These written documents, if a capture later resulted, made it very difficult to refuse the reward payment.

The use of rewards to support law enforcement in the West, despite the acknowledged faults, was a definite factor in establishing law and order. While their use to apprehend outlaws was important, wanted posters also played a vital role in making the public aware of crime problems, needed legislation, improved law enforcement, and more secure jails.



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SAM DREBEN: "The Fighting Jew"

By Art Leibson

According to Damon Runyon, "Sam Dreben was the bravest, the gentlest, the courtliest man I ever knew. But beneath the velvet of his demeanor was the iron of a warrior soul. They called him 'The Fighting Jew.'" Nevertheless, no more unlikely hero ever arrived on the American scene. Short, speaking in a guttural voice, he landed in New York at age eighteen broke and looking for a military career. As a stopgap he took a job in an uncle's Philadelphia tailor shop. Within a few weeks he enlisted in the army and was shipped to the Philippines where the U.S. was fighting off an insurrection in the wake of the Spanish-American War. In the Philippine campaign Sam embarked on a military career that included three hitches in the Army, one of which included a tour of duty in China during the Boxer Rebellion. It was in the Philippines, however, that he drew the attention of a man who was to become a good personal friend and admirer, Captain John J. (Black Jack) Pershing.

During one of his enlistments, Sam became a machine gunner, a profession he practiced in a number of Latin American revolutions. As a member of Pancho Villa's celebrated Golden Guards, he was pointed out by Villa as the only American he trusted. But Dreben was also a chief scout for Pershing when he led an expedition into Mexico to capture or kill Villa after the bandido raided Columbus, New Mexico. In all Sam fought under ten different flags.

In El Paso, Texas, Sam made and lost a fortune in mining stocks before joining a local outfit at America's entrance into World War I. Dreben's valorous service in Europe won the Distinguished Service Cross, the Croix de Guerre and the Medaille Militaire. Returning to the United States, Dreben found his family and business badly disrupted but that didn't stop him from seeking high adventure across the Rio Grande in Juarez. Emerging from that conflict slightly infirm, he moved to California. There, while being treated by a physician, Sam received a wrong injection and his wildly challenging life of adventure ended at age forty-six.

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DR. GOODFELLOW: Physician to the Gunfighters, Scholar, and Bon Vivant

By Don Chaput

George Goodfellow was a medical professional, not only at home in the primitive operating facilities of Tombstone and Bisbee, but also in lecture halls and prestigious hospitals of San Francisco and Los Angeles. His medical daring-do and accomplishments led to appointments, such as the first Arizona Territorial Health and Quarantine Officer, chief surgeon to the Southern Pacific Railroad, and during the Spanish-American War, in Cuba, he was personal physician to General William Shafter.

For those familiar with Goodfellow's name, "surgeon to the gunfighters" is probably the phrase that first comes to mind. This he was, par excellence, for he performed surgery on dozens of gunshot victims, results of saloon brawls, mining claim affrays, or quarrels between dueling cowboys and townsfolk in Bisbee, Tucson, and Tombstone. He operated successfully on U.S. Deputy Marshal Virgil Earp, but could only watch as Morgan Earp died of gunshot wounds on a Tombstone billiard hall floor.

Goodfellow was always in the middle of action. When a literary society was formed in Tombstone, he was one of the founders. When new mining or ranching properties were being developed, Goodfellow was on hand as a participant or as a surgeon. He was familiar with every gambling hall in Tombstone and Tucson, and not as an onlooker. George drank, gambled, had affairs, and was occasionally involved in fist fights — once in a stabbing.

Although Goodfellow died a relatively young man, he packed into half a century the accomplishments of a half dozen individuals. He had a varied career, and apparently enjoyed life to the fullest.

This beautifully composed book is designed in a 5½ x 8½-inch hard cover format, 228 pp., 22 photos, notes, bibliography and index. Dust cover in color. ISBN 0-87026-097-9. This is Volume 66 in Westernlore's Great West and Indian Series. Edition limited to 1,000 copies. **Price: $26.95**

THE DEVIL HAS FORECLOSED: The Private Journal of George Whitwell Parsons, Volume II The Concluding Arizona Years, 1882-1887

Feb. 1997 publication

Transcribed, edited, annotated, and indexed by Lynn R. Bailey

By 1883 the chronicler of Tombstone's turbulent years, George Whitwell Parsons, was no longer a tenderfoot. He was a knowledgeable mining man, savvy to the rigors and dangers of frontier living. His transition from San Francisco banker to diehard frontiersman is evident in his journals from 1883 until he left Arizona early in 1887. Here, for the first time in published form, is presented Parsons' struggles in Sonora, first trying to establish a quartz mill, then eking out an existence managing a company store in Nacosari, and finally plunging into gold mining in the nearby mountains which bankrupted him and forced his return to Tombstone.

Like Parsons, Tombstone was about to undergo adverse times, and fortunately George was there to record events. A rapid succession of calamities brought economic chaos to the town: mines were flooded, a bank collapsed, newly-installed pumping equipment failed, miners struck, and the price of silver fell forcing a shutdown of mining. If that was not enough, burning of the Grand Central hoist brought Tombstone to its knees. As George observed, it looked like the Devil had foreclosed.

There is more in this journal than just Tombstone's tribulations. Parsons gives his personal views upon Apache raiding, the merits of George Crook versus Nelson Miles. He was on hand to witness the introduction of heliograph to military operations and watched as members of Geronimo's band straggled toward Fort Bowie. His account of events along the Sonoran border, ranching activities in the Sulphur Spring Valley, and mining at Arivaca are incomparable. If you have Parsons' earlier journal you'll want this volume. This book is designed as a companion volume to *A Tenderfoot In Tombstone*, 6 x 9-inch format, 275 pages, printed endsheets and dust jacket in color. Augmenting the text are two interviews of George Parsons relative to events transpiring in the journal. As this edition is limited to 750 copies we suggest you reserve your's now. **Price: $36.95**

BOSQUE REDONDO: The Navajo Internment at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, 1863-68

March 1997 publication

By Lynn R. Bailey

The scorched earth policy of General James H. Carleton and Kit Carson destroyed Navajo subsistence, broke up family units, and brought quick results. Within months more than 8,000 Indians had surrendered to be carted and marched to Fort Sumner upon the Pecos River in east-central New Mexico. There, upon a forty mile square reserve known as Bosque Redondo, tribesmen lived for nearly five years. From 1863 until 1868 they obeyed military dictates as Carleton attempted to alter social structure and train tribesmen to live and interact like Pueblo peoples. However, this pastoral people, who had lived for generations in family groups, possessed no patterns for communal living on the scale envisioned by the military. The result was that regimentation created social stress that manifested itself in numerous ways, ranging from physical conflict among tribesmen, abandonment of the reservation by some Indians, and escapism through the practice of witchcraft. Adding to the pain of social upheaval and isolation, the Navajos suffered disease and starvation, as well as from raids by Plains Indians. In the end, the entire experiment collasped and the Navajos pleaded to be returned to their homeland.

From voluminous records of the U.S. Army and the Office of Indian Affairs, Mr. Bailey has drawn the documentation to detail a fascinating period of Navajo history. He does not stop there; reasons for the success of the Carleton-Carson campaign are presented, the several routes of the so-called Long Walk are traced, and social upheaval at Bosque Redondo is explored in light of current knowledge, as is army and civilian ineptitude, and the struggle between military leaders and Office of Indian Affairs officials for control of Indian policy. This attractive hard cover book is produced in 5½ x 8½ -inch format, contains 275 pages, 20 photos, maps and diagrams, notes, bibliography, and index. Dust jacket in color. Edition limited to 1,000 copies. **Price: $26.95**

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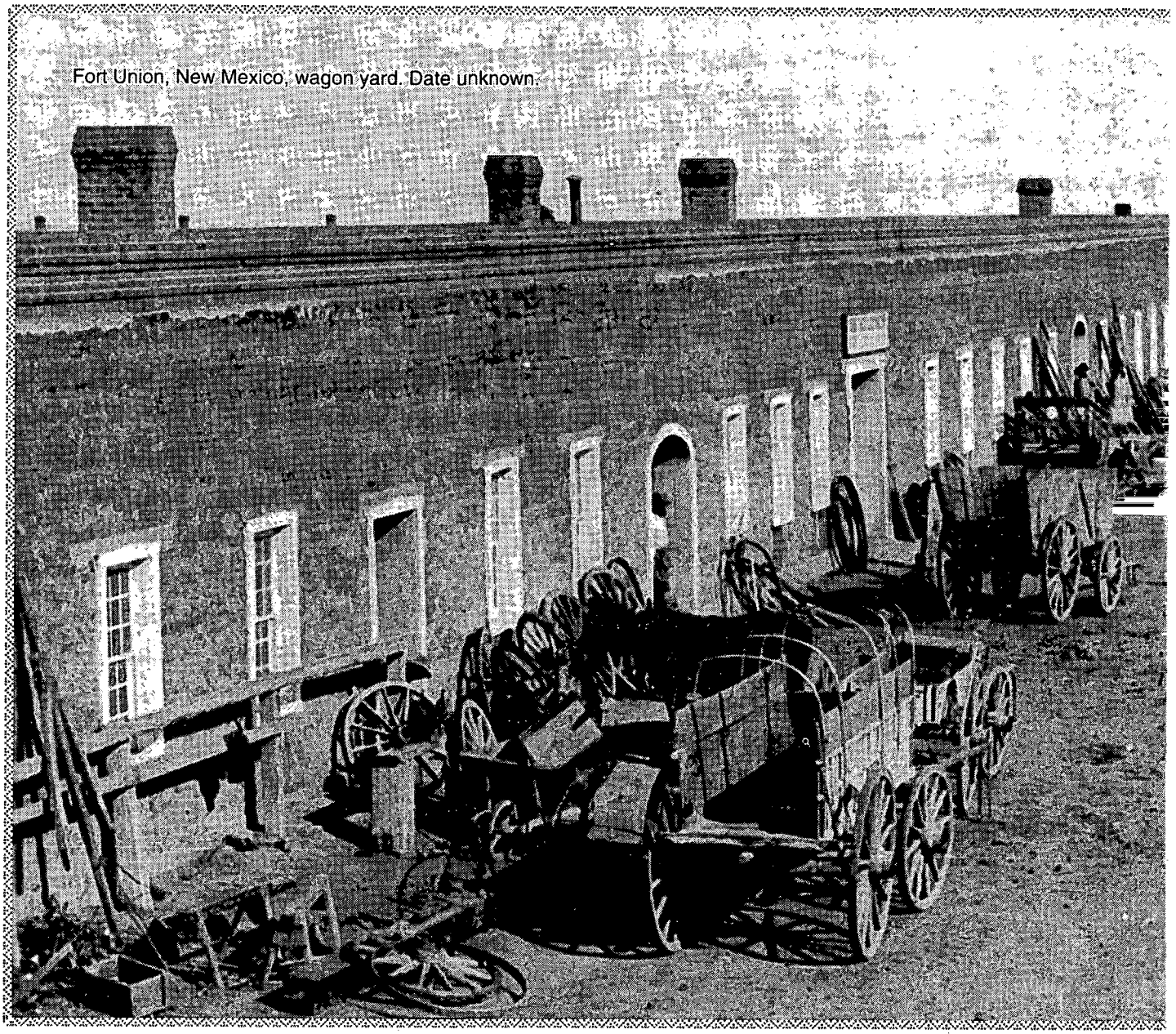

Fort Union, New Mexico, wagon yard. Date unknown.

FORT
NEW M

Once a thriving supply depot as well as military post, the weathered red adobe and brick ruins of Fort Union, New Mexico, lie on a barren plain, about a mile from the nearest mesa. Ruts of the nearby Santa Fe Trail are testimony to the heavy flow of traffic that once used the trail.

Between 1851 and 1891, Fort Union occupied three different sites. Established by Lieutenant Colonel Edwin Vose Sumner, the first fort (comprised of headquarters and supply depot) was built at the foot of a mesa.

An important station on the Santa Fe Trail, the adobe and log fort served as the base for military operations conducted against Apaches, Utes, Kiowas, and Comanches. Here, weary travelers also found a place to rest before continuing on their journey.

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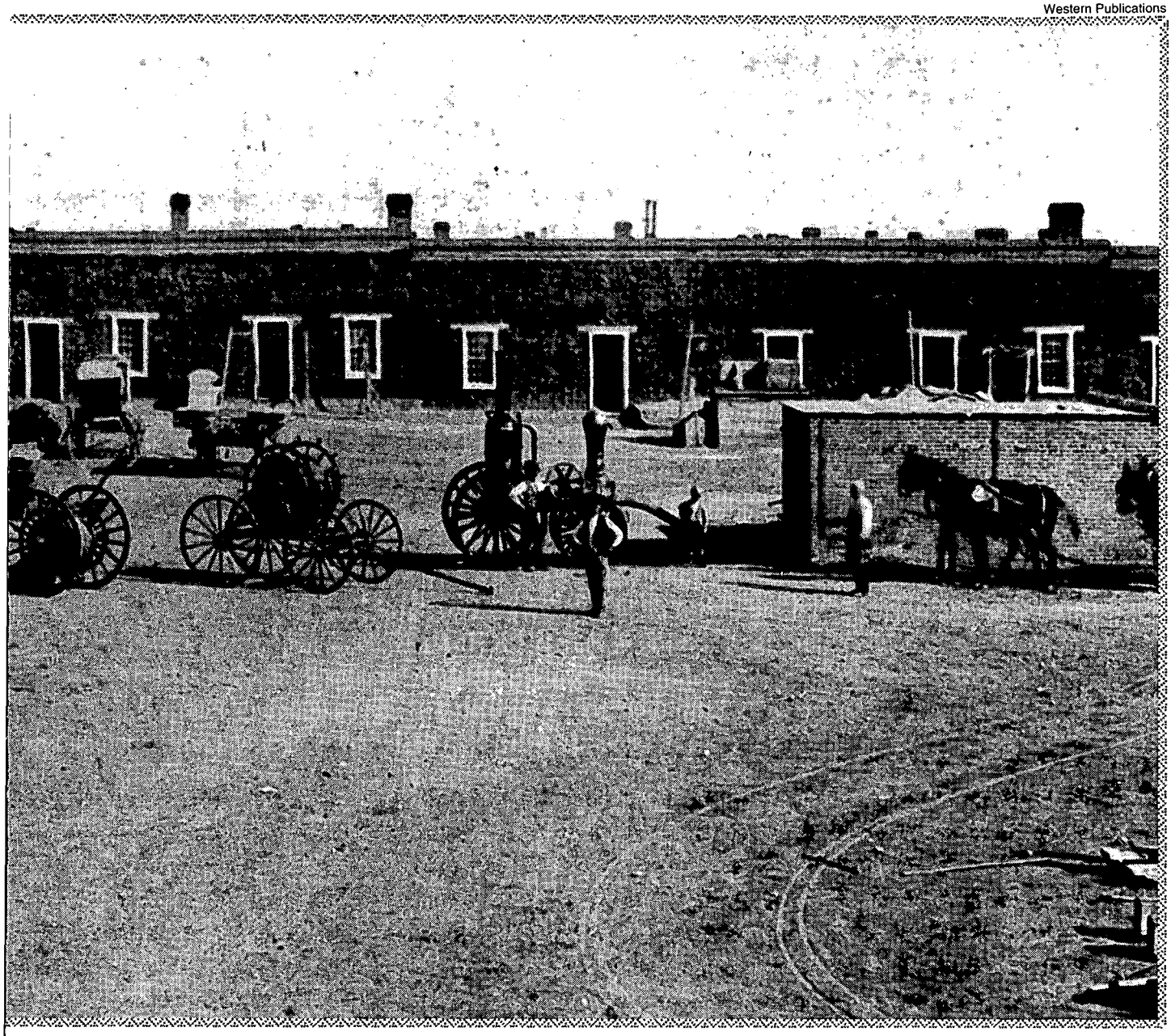

UNION, NEW MEXICO

by Diane C. Troncale

Due to continued deterioration of the first fort, construction on the second, or "star fort," began in 1861. With the outbreak of the Civil War, this eight-pointed earthen fortification, about a mile from the original site, was built to withstand attack by Confederate soldiers. However, after suffering defeat to a federal force at Glorieta Pass, the rebels never made it to Fort Union.

The star fort offered little comfort to the soldiers. The dark, damp, earthwork structure affected the soldiers' health.

After abandoning the star fort in 1862, construction began on the third fort, which was built of adobe and brick. This final fort was constructed in a box-like design, with no stockade, and combined two Army installations: the Military Post and the Quartermaster Depot. The Quartermaster Depot served as the

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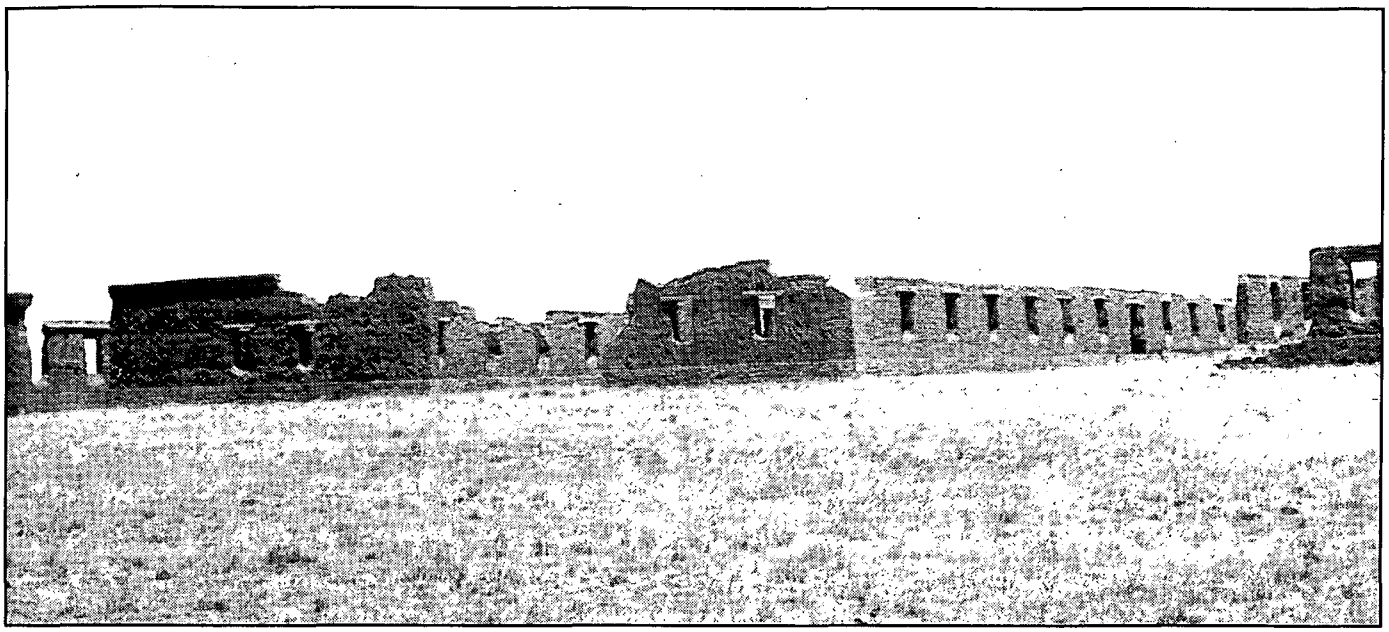


Author's Collection

Fort Union, New Mexico.

principal supply base for the Military Department of New Mexico, storing shipments that arrived on the Santa Fe Trail, until they were sent to other forts.

Life at Fort Union was fairly easy. In their spare time some of the soldiers worked in gardens, organized fraternal lodges, put on plays, or attended chapel or school. The post also had a regimental band which performed whenever the officers' wives wished to have an evening of dancing.

Others found enjoyment within a half-hour ride from the fort. Loma Parda offered the soldiers wine, women, and gambling—elements absent at the fort. It was often referred to as the chief recreation center.

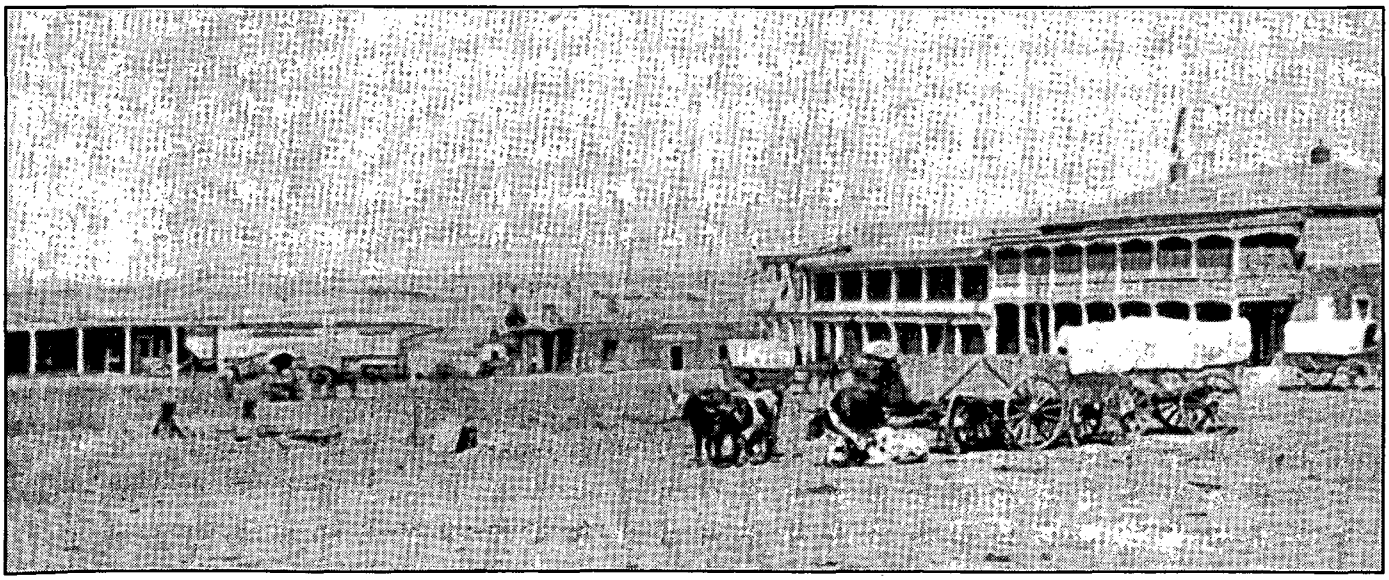
Throughout the 1860s and 1870s troops from Fort Union fought against hostile Indians. Peace finally came to the southern plains in 1875.

The Santa Fe Trail was eventually replaced by the Santa Fe Railroad. Year after year the fort's usefulness was less important. Abandoned in 1891, Fort Union is now a national monument.

To reach Fort Union take U.S. Highway 85 north from Watrous, New Mexico, one-half mile to State Road 477, ending at the fort. The entrance fee is two dollars per person or four dollars per car.

Las Vegas, New Mexico, twenty-eight miles southwest, is the nearest city with overnight accommodations.

For more information contact Fort Union National Monument, Watrous, NM 87753, phone (505) 425-8025.



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Las Vegas, New Mexico.

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True West Legends: Luke Short

By Olivia Robinson

1854, Mississippi—As seems to be the case with many western figures, not much is known about Luke's birth. Most sources place his birth in Mississippi in 1854, although some would argue that he was born in Arkansas. His family may have been in the process of moving to Texas at this time, which could account for the confusion.

1856-1876, Grayson County, Texas—By the time Luke turns two, his family settles in this area. Luke grows up as one of ten children. His education centers more on riding and shooting than on book learning. As a consequence of this education (or lack of) Bat Masterson would later remark that as a young man, Luke could barely write his name legibly.

1876, Red Cloud Indian Agency, Dakota Territory—Luke leaves home and arrives in the area ready to go into business for himself. He chooses a popular trade of the era—selling bootleg whiskey to the Indians at highly inflated prices. Unfortunately for Luke, the Department of the Interior catches on. As luck has it, however, on the day government officials apprehend Luke, his partner happens to be out of town. On his way to jail, Luke spies his comrade in Sidney, Nebraska, and the two somehow communicate (possibly through hand signals) and plots a successful escape.

1878-1881—Luke seems to slip through the web of history during this time. Accounts variously place him as a scout for the army hunting Dull Knife's Cheyenne band or gambling and killing in Leadville, Colorado. By this time Luke has reached his full height and his name fits his appearance. Blond-haired Luke stands only five foot four inches.

1881, Dodge City, Kansas—Luke makes his first appearance in the town in which he is to gain his fame. During this time he becomes friends with Wyatt Earp and Bat Masterson.

1881, Arizona Territory—Luke follows the Earp group down to Arizona. He finds a job dealing faro at the Oriental, and it is here that his trouble begin. On one occasion Luke is dealing when a man named Charley Storms begins to harass him. Fearing the possible outcome, Bat Masterson pulls Storms outside to warn him to stop bothering Luke. Storms does not take this advice and walks back into the saloon to continue where he had left off. Luke shoots him. Although acquitted of murder, Luke thinks it best to leave town.

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True West Legends: Luke Short

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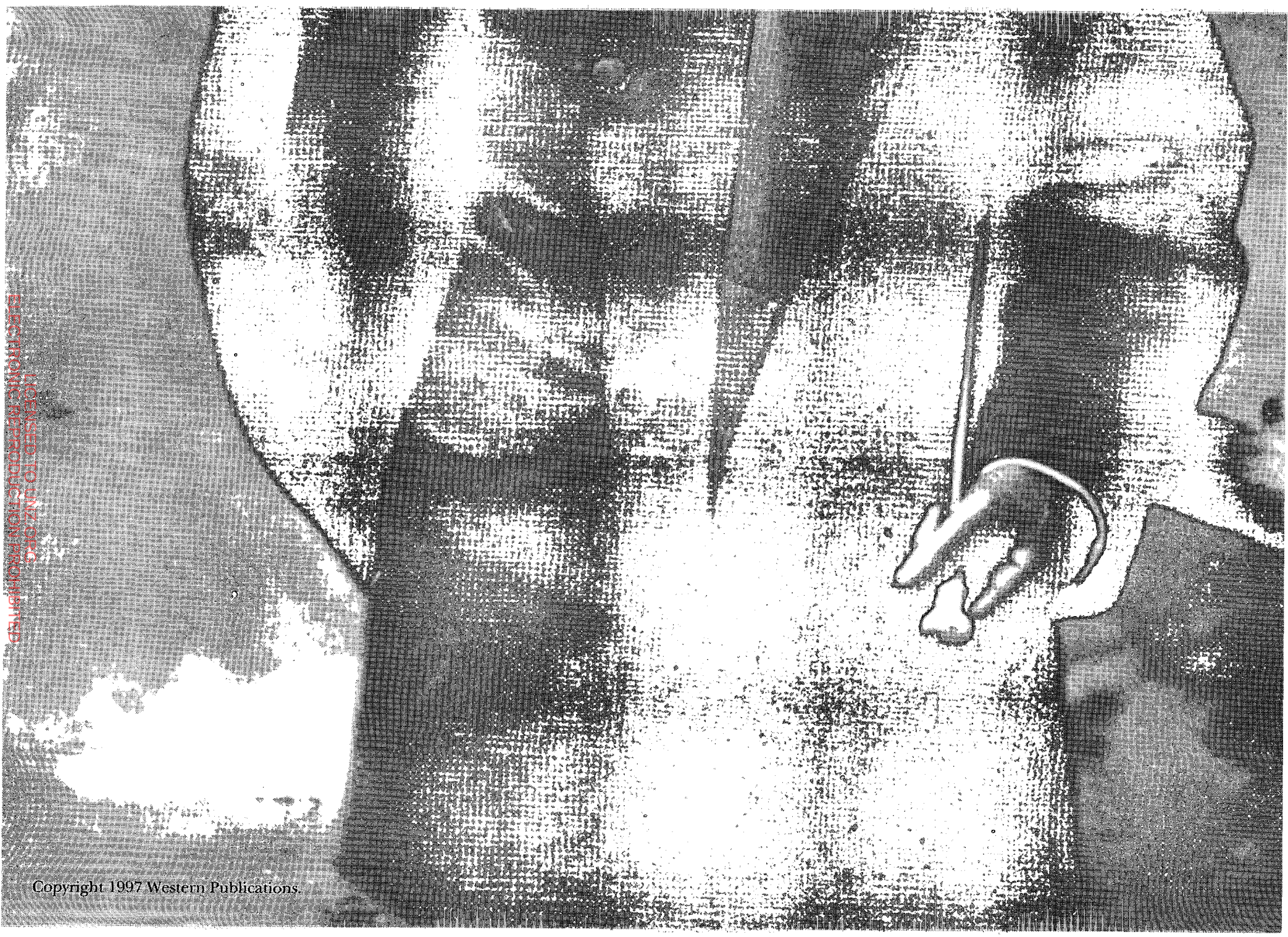

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True West Legends: Luke Short

1883, Dodge City, Kansas—Upon returning to Dodge City, Luke purchases the famous Long Branch Saloon. As the owner of this saloon, Luke becomes the catalyst for the formation of the Dodge City Peace Commission. The situation begins when Luke hires a musical act to appear in his saloon. When the performers begin to take business away from other establishments, the local government reminds Short of an ordinance prohibiting music in saloons. Luke fires the troupe only to discover that, oddly enough, the mayor's saloon has a musical act the very next night. Luke promptly rehires the musicians and when reminded again of the ordinance, he tries to shoot the messenger. Fortunately, the deputy delivering the message trips and the shot misses him. Luke, however, is asked to leave town.

A fuming Luke soon appears in Topeka to explain to the government his mistreatment. When state officials do not seem to recognize the importance of the incident, he begins to telegraph his friends.

His friends are much more sympathetic to his plight and begin to convene in Dodge where they form the famous Dodge City Peace Commission, consisting of Luke Short, Bat Masterson, Wyatt Earp, William Harris, Charlie Bassett, M.F. McClain, and Neil Brown.

The appearance of this group calms the city government. Local officials drop the charges against Luke, and he once more takes control of the Long Branch. He also takes the opportunity to make some minor personnel adjustments on the police force.

1887, Fort Worth, Texas—Luke leaves Kansas for Texas in 1885. In Fort Worth he becomes the part-owner of the White Elephant Saloon. While working here he runs into a "detective" named Jim Courtright who likes to sell "protection" to area saloons. When he approaches Luke, however, he is told in no uncertain terms where to go. On his second visit he asks to see Luke outside. Although Courtright draws first, his gun apparently catches on something and Luke shoots him. After Courtright dies, Luke proceeds to shoot him four more times for good measure. The incident is ruled justifiable homicide.

1893, Geuda Springs, Kansas—After an eventful life, Luke dies at the age of thirty-nine from dropsy. With him at his death is a woman described as his wife. Although no marriage records exist, the Kansas State Historical Society today has in its archives a photo of a woman identified as Hattie Buck, wife of Luke Short. Luke was buried in Fort Worth, Texas.

Hattie Buck

Kansas State Historical Society

What to Read:

Luke Short and His Era, by William Cox. Although this book is out-of-print and hard to find, to date it is the only full length, published biography on Luke Short.
Knights of the Green Cloth, by Robert K. DeArment. University of Oklahoma Press.
Bat Masterson, by Robert K. DeArment. University of Oklahoma Press.

Where to Go:

Dodge City, Kansas—Among other attractions, the re-created Front Street in Dodge features a reproduction of the Long Branch Saloon owned by Luke.
Fort Worth, Texas—Short is buried at the Oakwood Cemetery.

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Outlaws & Lawmen

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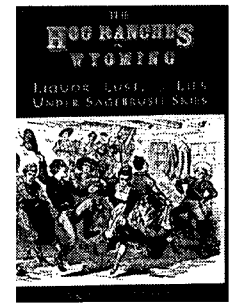

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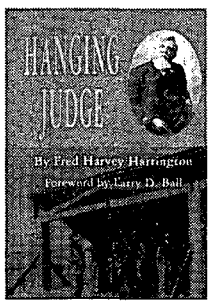

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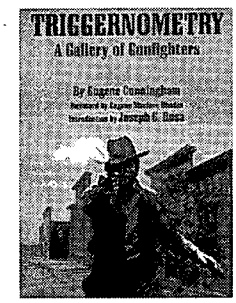

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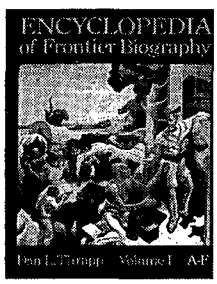

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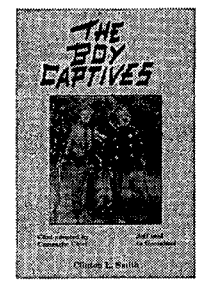

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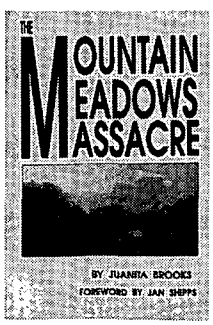

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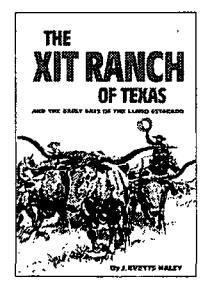

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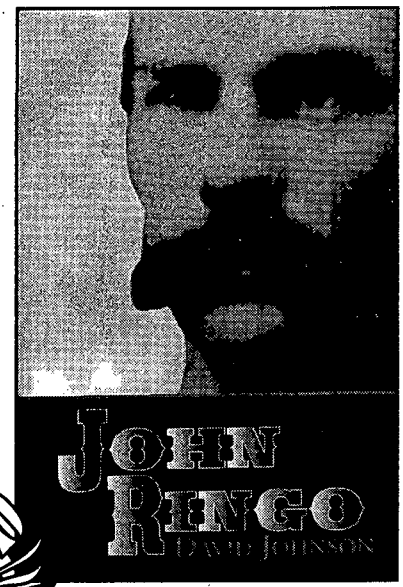

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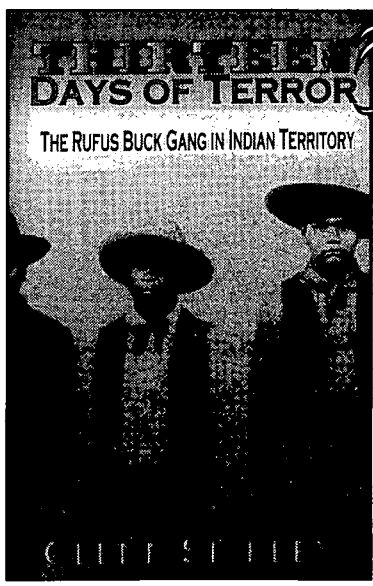

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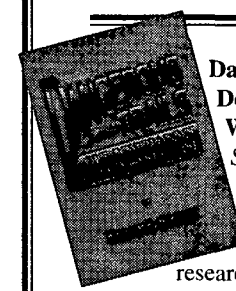

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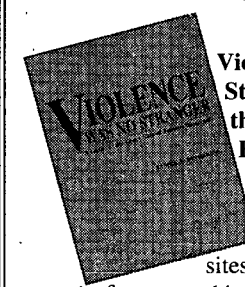

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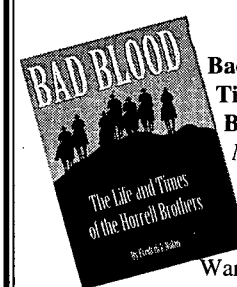

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BEN McCULLOCH: SHAPING THE WEST

by Charles W. Sasser

If one man could be singled out as being most identified with the opening of the American West, that man would have to be Benjamin McCulloch. As frontiersman, miner, settler, lawman, soldier, Indian fighter, and statesman, he participated in and influenced most of the major events that shaped the West and the nation.

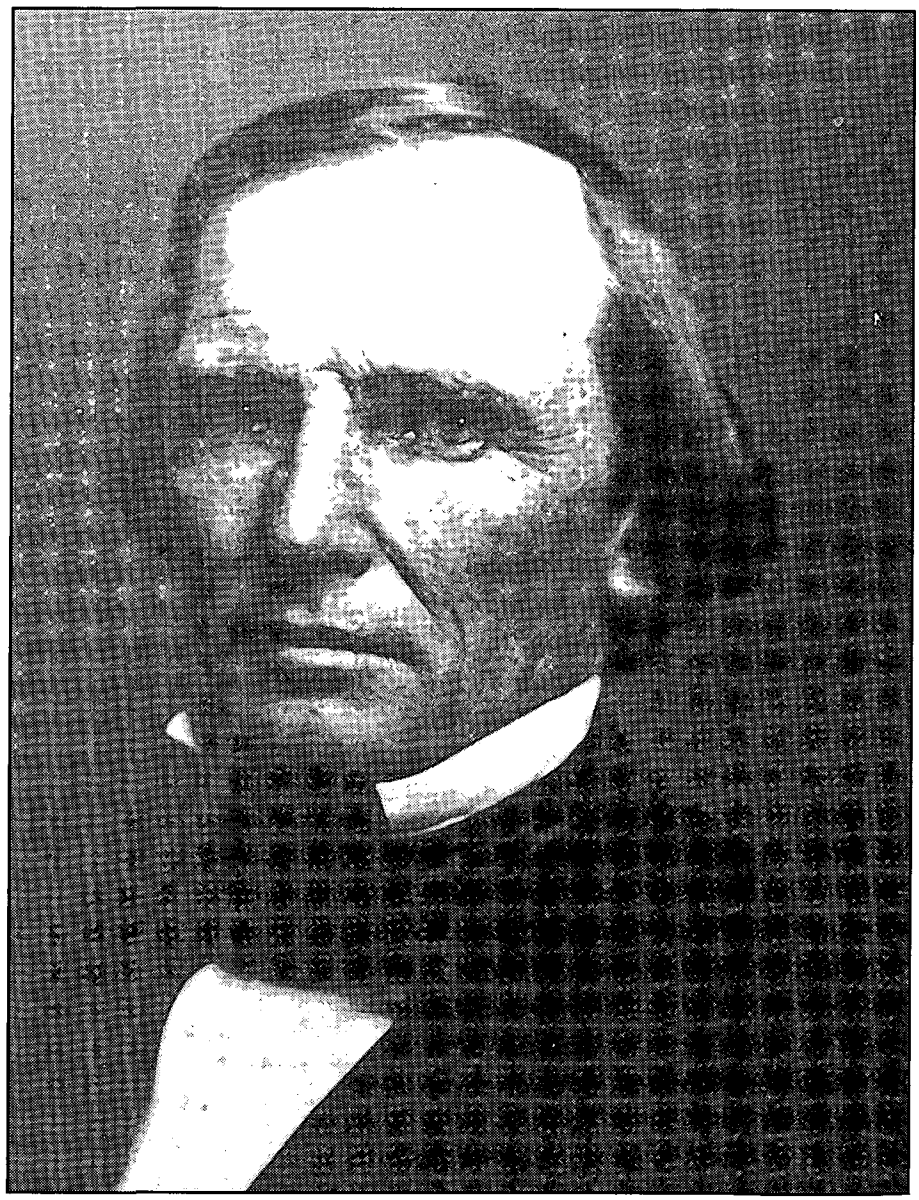
He was born in Tennessee on November 11, 1811, the son of Alexander McCulloch, a veteran of the Battle of New Orleans and the Creek Indian Wars. His youth came under the influence of his family's colorful and flamboyant neighbor—Davy Crockett. Crockett reportedly confided to friends that by the time Ben was twenty-one he had surpassed Crockett himself as a woodsman and "b'ar hunter." McCulloch killed as many as eighty bears in a season.

McCulloch was described in early adulthood as "of rather delicate frame, of about five feet ten inches in height, with light hair and complexion. His features are regular and pleasing, though from long exposure on the frontier they have a weather beaten cast. His quick and bright blue eyes, with a mouth of thin compressed lips, indicate the cool calculating, as well as the brave and daring energy of the man."

It was that "brave and daring energy" he shared with men like Crockett and his own father that drove him west from Tennessee in 1833. He crossed the Mississippi River and for two years roamed, searching for his niche in life. Everywhere he went, it seemed, he was an hour or a day or a week too late.

By the time he reached St. Louis, intent on making his fortune in furs, the traders and trappers had departed for the mountains. He attempted to sign on with mule freighters bound for Santa Fe, but the company had already hired a full complement of skinners and freighters. He drifted to Wisconsin where he discovered large mining claims had taken up most of the rich claims and destroyed the boom in lead.

He worked the lead mines for wages until the fall of 1835. He



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Benjamin McCulloch put his mark on the great events that shaped the West.

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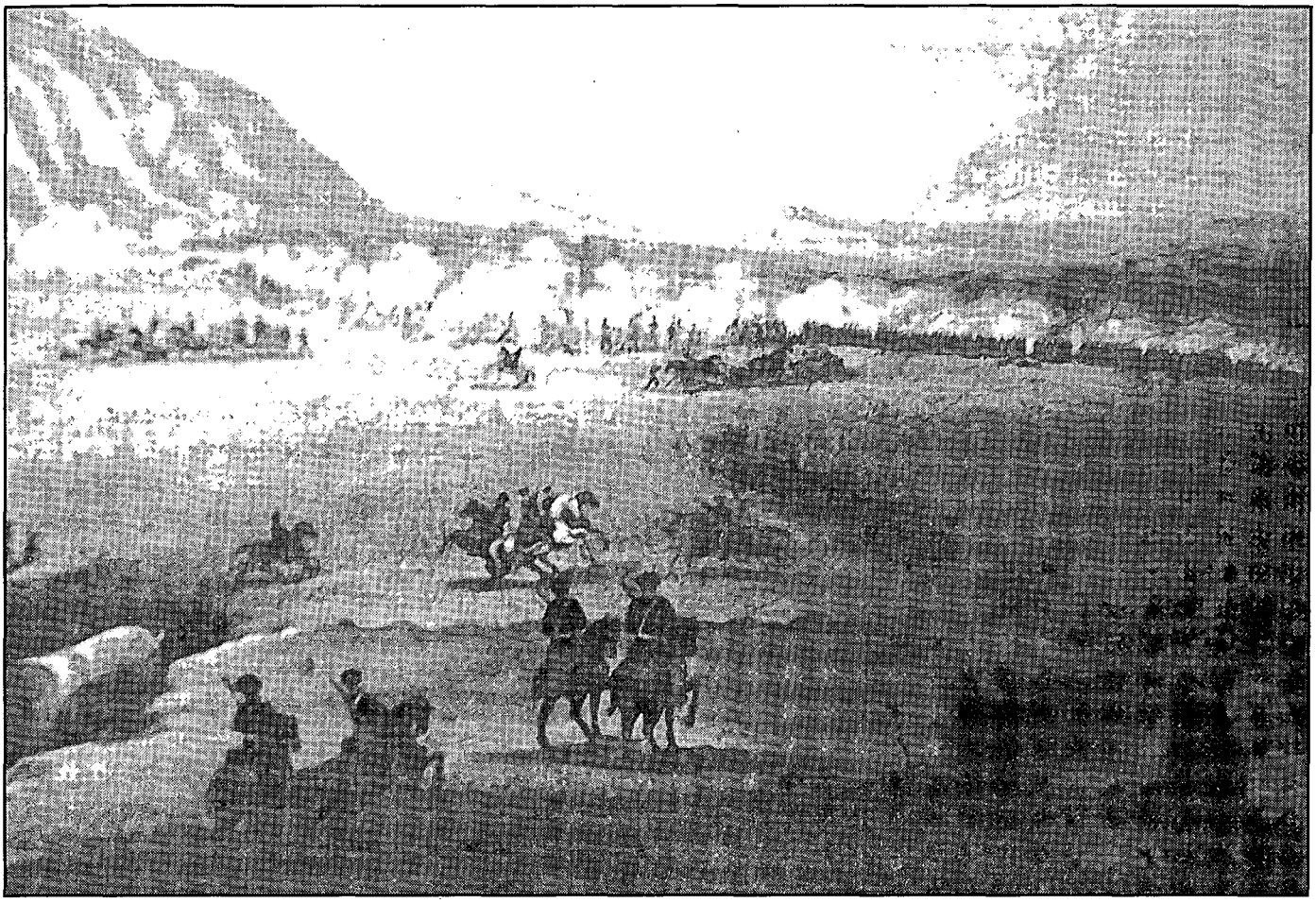

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Prior to the Battle of Buena Vista, McCulloch sneaked into Santa Ana's camp to spy on his forces.

returned to Tennessee to find that the ever-adventurous Davy Crockett was raising a force of men to march to Texas to help fight the tyrannical rule of Mexico's Generalissimo Antonio López de Santa Ana. Ben enlisted and made arrangements to meet Crockett in Nacagadoches, Mississippi, on Christmas Day, 1835.

Fortunately for him, his propensity for tardiness held. He and his brother Henry rode into Nacagadoches in early January 1836 to find that Crockett and his men had pushed west the week before. Ben was further delayed when he came down with a fever that kept him bedridden for several weeks. It was not until February that he recovered sufficiently to resume his long ride to Texas. By then, the defiant "Texicans" led by Crockett, James Bowie, and Colonel William Travis had occupied the Alamo at San Antonio.

On his way to San Antonio, Ben and his brother ran into the former governor of Tennessee, Sam Houston, who was now the leader of Texas resistance against Santa Ana. Houston was working through the region south of the Brazos River recruiting volunteers for his army. Instead of riding on to the Alamo, the McCulloch brothers joined him. General Houston placed Ben in charge of one of the two cannons in his army's arsenal.

For the next two months, Houston held his ragtag army to a strategy of skirmish-and-retreat. He realized he was no match for Santa Ana's forces; his timing would have to be precise in order to wrest victory from otherwise certain defeat. When he fought a full battle, he would have to have every advantage on his side.

On March 27, three weeks after the fall of the Alamo, Mexican troops at Goliad defeated a contingent of Texas volunteers and then executed over 300 prisoners.

Newly-elected Texas President David Burnet wrote a blistering letter to Houston: "Sir, the enemy are laughing you to scorn. You must fight them. You must retreat no further. The country expects you to fight."

Finally, on April 21, Houston and his 800 Texans, including Ben McCulloch and his brother, caught Santa Ana's 1,250 unsuspecting soldiers by complete surprise near the San Jacinto River at Galveston Bay. Shouting "Remember the Alamo!" and "Remember Goliad!," the Texans "slaughtered like sheep" more than 600 enemy soldiers while losing only nine of their own.

During the heat of the battle Sam Houston galloped his horse directly in front of Ben McCulloch's cannon. Surprisingly cool under fire, McCulloch shouted, "Cease fire!" in time to prevent a fatal mistake that could well have changed the course

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of history.

McCulloch had found and fought for his destiny in Texas. He settled near Gonzales after the war where he earned his living for some time as a surveyor and land locator for hordes of land-hungry emigrants. Texas offered new opportunities. But it could also be a harsh and cruel land of dust and rain, burning heat and freezing cold, outlaws and Indians.

Texans pushing west and north tangled with Kiowa, Apache, and Comanche Indians. The Comanches were the most formidable. They hunted to eat, but they lived to fight.

Farther south, Mexican bandits and soldiers raided into the Neuces Strip, attacking Texas settlers on the basis that the Neuces River, not the Rio Grande, marked the true border between Texas and Mexico.

Ben McCulloch, who proved popular among the Texas settlers, served a term in the Texas legislature as a representative from Gonzales before giving up affairs of state to follow a more adventurous course as Indian fighter and lawman.

The government called for volunteer "border scouts" to patrol against Indians and bandits, because the state was too poor to afford a standing army. Sam Houston, now president of the Texas republic, soon reorganized the border scouts into a force of 600 men, which became known as the Texas Rangers, the only law along the Texas frontier. Ben McCulloch was among those who enlisted with the Rangers.

It was said that a Ranger had to be able to "ride like a Mexican, track like a Comanche, shoot like a Kentuckian, and fight like the Devil."

Ben McCulloch quickly advanced to the rank of captain and became a Ranger leader. His was a familiar and celebrated figure from the Brazos River to the Rio Grande. Between the first Mexican war and the Mexican War of 1847, Captain McCulloch led Rangers against Indians and badmen all over Texas. Samuel Reid, a volunteer from Louisiana, described McCulloch and his Ranger company:

"Men in groups with long beards and mustaches, dressed in every variety of garment, with one exception, the slouched hat, the unmistakable uniform of a Texas Ranger and a belt of pistol around their waists, were occupied drying their blankets, cleaning and fixing their guns, and some employed cooking at different fires, while others were grooming their horses. A rougher looking set we never saw. They were without tents, and a miserable shed afforded them the only shelter. Capt. McCulloch introduced us to his officers and many of his men, who appeared orderly and well-mannered people. But from their rough exterior it was hard to tell who or what they were. Notwithstanding their ferocious and outlaw look, there were among them doctors and lawyers, and many a college graduate."

Rangers used their effective mobile assault forces to eventually drive the Comanches out of Texas. The United States cavalry later adopted their tactics to obliterate Indian resistance in the West.

In 1847, after years of coping with Mexicans plundering the Texas frontier under cover of their flag,

Author's Collection

Members of the Texas Rangers. McCulloch's exploits as a company commander helped make the Rangers legendary.

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Author's Collection

On March 7, 1862, during the battle of Pea Ridge, in Arkansas, General Ben McCulloch was killed by a Union sharpshooter in this treeline surrounding Oberson's Field.

the United States finally sent General Zachary Taylor to invade Mexico and end the border dispute. Taylor employed several companies of Texas Rangers as scouts. Captain Ben McCulloch, promoted to major, became General Taylor's chief scout.

McCulloch led a probe deep into Mexican territory in search of General Antonio Canales, known as the Chaparral Fox. His Rangers covered 250 miles in ten days and never took off their boots. After they missed Canales, they found a better route along which to reach Mexico City.

In February 1847, prior to the Battle of Buena Vista, General Taylor dispatched McCulloch and one of his men, William Phillips, to locate Santa Ana and fix his position. The Rangers found the Mexican army sixty miles south of Encarnación. They slipped past Santa Ana's pickets under cover of darkness, entered the enemy camp and stationed themselves on a small hummock where they estimated the enemy's numerical strength at 20,000, assessed Santa Ana's capabilities, and determined his probable direction of march.

After they returned with their report, General Taylor commented wryly, "Very well, Major McCulloch, that's all I wanted to know. I am glad they did not catch you."

McCulloch and his Rangers fought in the bloody battle at Buena Vista, a narrow victory for the United States that opened the way for Taylor to advance to the Mexican capital. Rangers also fought with such ferocity at Monterrey and elsewhere that Taylor opined that he cared little for their violent ways. However, he added, "On the day of battle I am glad to have Texas soldiers with me, for they are brave and gallant; but I never want to see them before or afterward."

The end of the war in 1849 added Arizona, New Mexico, and California to the United States. Still filled with the frontier restlessness that had marked his character since youth, McCulloch set out on another odyssey reminiscent of his 1833 trek into Missouri and Wisconsin.

As with the lead boom in Wisconsin, he reached California too late to share in the 1849 Gold Rush. He prospected only briefly before being elected sheriff in Sacramento. He soon drifted back to Texas where, in 1853, he was appointed United States marshal for the coastal district. While he was marshal, President James Buchanan appointed him and former Kentucky Governor Lazuras W. Powell as "peace commissioners" to avert a "Mormon War" in Utah. McCulloch was well respected because of his political, military, and law enforcement records.

The dispute between the Mormon commune and the U.S. government had begun in 1847 after Brigham Young led his committed followers to the shores of the Great

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Salt Lake. Bitter clashes with federal officials occurred over the religious lifestyles of the Mormons, especially over the practice of having multiple wives. Over 11,000 people lived in the region when it became part of Utah Territory as a result of the Compromise of 1850. Brigham Young became the territory's governor.

The Mountain Meadows Massacre of 1857, in which Mormons dressed as Indians attacked a westbound wagon train, slaughtered more than 100 men, women, and children, and stole their belongings provided the catalyst to an unstable situation that finally forced Washington to act. President Buchanan appointed a new set of territorial officials, including a governor to replace Young, and prepared to send 2,500 troops to Utah to enforce his order.

Young in turn placed Utah under martial law, mobilized the "Nauvoo Legion," and prepared to oppose federal "invaders."

"Before I will suffer what I have in times gone by," Young thundered, "there shall not be one building, nor one foot of lumber, nor a stick, nor a tree, nor a particle of grass and hay that will burn, left in reach of our enemies. I am sworn, if driven to extremity, to utterly lay waste to this land...."

McCulloch and Powell entered a deserted town when they arrived in Salt Lake City on April 6, 1858. The Mormons had withdrawn and set up fortifications in the hills. At first recalcitrant and insulting, the elders held out for two days before McCulloch persuaded them to abide by the Constitution of the United States. He made it clear that it was either that or face advancing federal troops. War, in which the Mormons were prepared to fight to the last man, woman, and child, had been avoided.

Ben was forty-eight and thinking seriously about retiring from the public limelight to become an ordinary rancher. He had been at war as soldier and lawman for over twenty years. Unfortunately for him, he had one last war to attend—the greatest and most destructive war of the nineteenth century.

After Confederates opened fire on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, President Abraham Lincoln promptly issued a call for 75,000 federal volunteers. Following years of compromise and quarrel over states' rights and slavery, the nation at last chose to settle the conflicts by force of arms. Quite naturally, Ben McCulloch stood by Texas.

"To Texans," he declared as he accepted his commission as a brigadier general in the Confederate Army, "a moment's notice is sufficient when their State demands their service."

McCulloch helped raise troops for the defense of Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Indian Territory. He made treaties with the Indians to fight for the South and rode as far north as Baltimore in an arms quest for the Confederate cause. President Jefferson Davis then ordered him to Fort Smith, Arkansas, to prepare against an imminent invasion.

Federal forces in Missouri had been struggling with the Missouri State Guard for control of that state. McCulloch's Arkansas forces, along with the South Kansas-Texas Brigade and other volunteers, reinforced the Missouri Guard and waged a number of minor skirmishes against northern troops. Confederates narrowly routed federals in August 1861 at the Battle of Wilson's Creek. Instead of following up on the victory, however, McCulloch withdrew his regiment to winter quarters in the Boston Mountains outside Van Buren, Arkansas.

In January 1862, President Davis appointed General Earl Van Dorn commander-in-chief of the combined forces of Missouri and Arkansas. Van Dorn's army included 7,000 soldiers of the Missouri Guard, 8,300 men from McCulloch's regiment, and General Albert Pike's 1,000 Indians. Van Dorn assumed he had the nucleus he needed to drive Union troops from Missouri.

The commander of federal forces in Missouri, General Samuel E. Curtis, had other ideas. He pushed the Missouri Guard south and advanced on Van Buren. At 10 AM on March 7, 1862, the two armies met in a bitter battle at a place called Pea Ridge inside the Arkansas border northeast of Bentonville.

The battle weaved back and forth around Elkhorn Tavern and Oberson's Field, with neither side managing to win a decisive advantage. During a lull in the fight around 2 PM, General Ben McCulloch rode out to the edge of the woodline that surrounded Oberson's Field to study the battlefield. Dressed in his black velvet suit and Duke of Wellington boots, he sat his horse quietly in the shadows of the trees.

A Union sharpshooter named Peter Pelican of the Thirty-sixth Illinois drew bead on the lone rider.

A single shot cracked.

McCulloch lurched forward in his saddle and pitched to the ground, dead.

The Battle of Pea Ridge ended with Confederates scattered all over northwestern Arkansas. Some soldiers went in search of food, some in search of comrades, and some just went home. The Confederates had lost both Missouri and their war in the West. And upon this bloody battlefield lay General Benjamin McCulloch, the man whose restless life had led him to put his mark upon many of the great events in America's move west.

A Union sharpshooter named Peter Pelican of the Thirty-sixth Illinois drew bead on the lone rider. A single shot cracked.

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After two months in Mexico, Second Lieutenant George S. Patton, Jr., wa: manded the American Punitive Expedition, he had been out on many a Chihuahua desert for the elusive Pancho Villa and his fast-moving band.

LIEUTENANT

Author's Collection

Second Lieutenant George S. Patton while an aide to General John Pershing during the American Punitive Expedition to Mexico in 1916.

Ever since Pancho Villa, in a rage against gringos, had in March 1916, shot up Columbus, New Mexico, and a wavering President Woodrow Wilson had finally given General John J. Pershing orders to cross the Mexican border to pursue and destroy his ragtag army, Second Lieutenant George S. Patton had craved a chance for action.

When the American Punitive Expedition was formed Patton had badgered Pershing for a job as his aide-de-camp. When he received the appointment, he became the most eager member of Pershing's staff. Thirty years old, tall, slender, aristocratic, and good-looking, he was a popular officer, not only because of a bubbling personality but also because he would take on any job, dirty or difficult, with determination and enthusiasm.

By May, Pershing had located his headquarters near Rubio, more than 200 miles deep into Chihuahua. Feeding men and more particularly horses in that barren countryside was a more difficult problem for the army than the occasional skirmishes with stray Villistas. That part of Chihuahua could hardly feed its own population much less provide fodder for the gringo invaders.

When intelligence reported that corn could be purchased at nearby Rubio and Coyote, Pershing called on his all-purpose aide, Second Lieutenant Patton, to take a small party of three automobiles and ten soldiers on a corn-buying expedition.

Before departing camp on May 14, in three big Dodge touring cars, Patton surveyed his little band. There were two civilian drivers, ten infantrymen armed with the famed Springfield Model 1903 rifles, and two civilian scouts. One, a tall, lanky, lean-faced man, named Emil Holmdahl, leaned against one of the cars with a saturnine leer and a big Colt .45 caliber revolver strapped to his waist.

Holmdahl was a legend among the war correspondents and mercenary soldiers who had been reporting or fighting with the many Mexican warlords since the Revolution broke out in 1910.

A former sergeant in the American army who served in the Philippine Insurrection, he had also fought in the Boxer Rebellion in China and later as a soldier-of-fortune with the infamous American filibuster, Lee Christmas, in a number of Central American "Banana Wars."

In 1910 he joined the Mexican revolutionists in their fight against the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. In 1913 he had fought alongside Pancho Villa in the big battles against

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ing for a fight. As an aide to Brigadier General John Pershing, who com-
erous ride carrying orders to different columns of cavalry searching the

ATTON'S RAID

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ **By Douglas V. Meed**

the new dictatorship of Victoriano Huerta at Chihuahua City, San Andres, and Tierra Blanca. After a falling out with Villa in December 1913, he joined the Constitutional forces of Venustiano Carranza who were at war with the Villistas.

In 1915, Holmdahl was arrested by American federal agents for violating United States neutrality laws in that he was raising fighting men on American soil and attempting to smuggle guns and ammunition to Constitutionalist forces gathering at Columbus, New Mexico, for an attack on Villa forces in that area.

On October 20, 1915, Holmdahl and two accomplices were convicted in a federal district court in El Paso and sentenced to eighteen months in a federal prison. In a act of classic chutzpah, while out on appeal bond, Holmdahl, citing his extensive combat experience as a colonel in the Mexican revolutionary armies, applied to the War Department in Washington, D.C., for a regular army commission as a officer in the cavalry.

In a letter to the army adjutant general he stated that he had fought in battles all over Mexico for more than five years and knew both the terrain of Mexico and the tactics of that country's soldiers. He said his services would be most valuable in what he believed would soon be an armed clash between U.S. and Mexican armed forces.

The army, however, rather rudely turned him down. Three months later Pancho Villa raided Columbus, New Mexico, and turned Holmdahl into a prophet. The Neutrality Law conviction was quickly pardoned and this tough, steely-eyed mercenary was hired by General Pershing as a civilian scout.

Perhaps Holmdahl's grin was in anticipation that the young, and as yet combat untried lieutenant would order his men to carry sabers. For if there was one flaw, or eccentricity, in Patton's makeup as a soldier it was his dedicated belief in the value of an old fashioned cavalry saber charge. Patton had, in fact, designed the saber issued to U.S. Cavalry Regiments and constantly preached a doctrine of the "arme blanche" to anyone who would listen.

Most officers, including General Pershing, only smiled at the young officer's declamations and often pointed out that a line of cavalry each firing seven shots from the recently issued Model 1911 Colt .45 automatic pistol had much more shock power than troopers leaning in their saddles trying to stick an opponent.

That morning, however, there was no mention of sabers and the little group climbed into the three cars and drove

Author's Collection

Brigadier General John "Blackjack" Pershing sent his young aide on a "routine" mission into Villa country.

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about twenty miles down the bumpy trail to Coyote, where Patton was able to buy a few bushels of corn. Next they drove a few miles farther to Rubio.

As they entered the town a few minutes before noon, Holmdahl spotted a number of men loitering around the plaza. Although they were unarmed, Holmdahl recognized some of them as Villistas he had soldiered with in campaigns against the Huerta dictatorship.

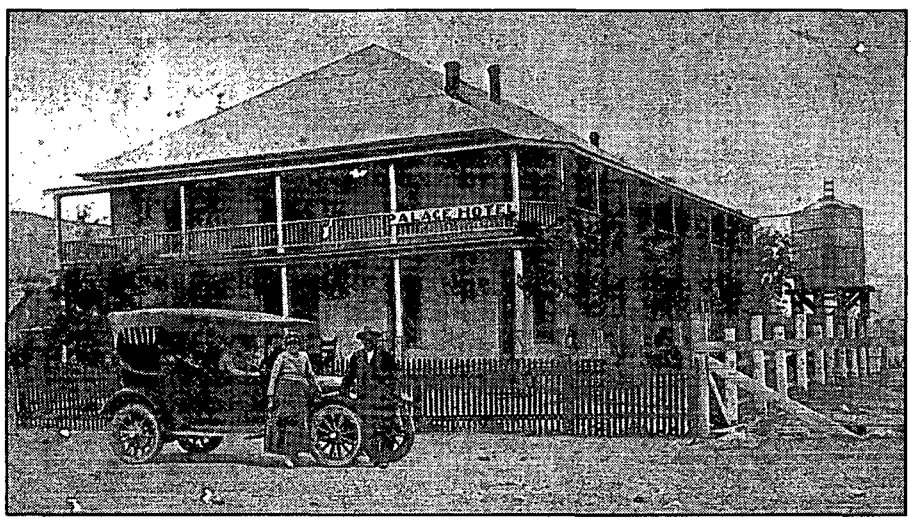
"They are Villa's men," he whispered, "and they are a bad lot." As the men sighted Holmdahl they drifted away down the crooked side streets of the town. The scout's warning set off alarm bells in the young lieutenant's mind. He recalled that one of Villa's chief henchmen, Colonel Julio Cardenas, who had once led his elite troop of "Dorados," the golden ones, was rumored to be in the area.

He remembered that twelve days earlier on May 2 he accompanied H Troop of the Eleventh Cavalry on a swift approach to the San Miguelito Ranch eight miles north of Rubio where the wife and mother of Cardenas were said to be living.

The troop deployed around the hacienda and swooped down upon the walled main house only to find it deserted. But Patton had a premonition about the place. He studied the buildings and surrounding terrain, just in case he would return on another day.

That morning, he reasoned, if Villa's men were in Rubio then Cardenas might be holed up at the ranch. Driving a few miles north of Rubio, Patton called a halt and briefed his little band of fifteen men. The hacienda was built in two L-shaped wings with a walled courtyard encompassing the entire structure. There was a horse corral a few dozen yards beyond the main gate.

While there were windows facing outside the walls there was only the one gate where a horseman could ride out and escape.



Author's Collection

The Palace Hotel in Sierra Blanca, Texas, where gunfighter Dave Allison told Patton, "When you are attacked by a man on horseback, shoot at the horse."

The hacienda was 200 yards east of the road that Patton had taken from Rubio. On the side opposite the road was the main gate. If the Villistas attempted to escape they would have to gallop out of the gate, cross the road, and ride for the mountains to the west of the ranch.

Patton's plan was for the first auto, in which he rode, to drive past the hacienda and then make a quick stop. Patton and two men would leap out of the auto and run to the northern end of the structure. Holmdahl and the driver would remain in the car and cover the north side of the walled area near the corral.

The second and third cars were to stop on the road south of the complex. Three men from each of those cars would dismount and dash to the southern end of the building to intercept anyone leaping from the windows and dashing to freedom. The two men remaining in each of the cars would be able to stop others running from the building and, if necessary and terrain permitting, to drive in pursuit of any fleeing bandits.

As the three cars drove up by the ranch buildings, Patton spotted three elderly men and a young boy skinning a cow in the front yard. The boy, eyeing the braking autos, turned and ran through the front gateway waving his arms and yelling. Seconds later he returned and calmly went back to helping his elders skin the beast.

Patton said he "jumped out [of the auto], rifle in my left hand" ran to the northern end of the hacienda, while the men from the other cars rushed to the southern end of the complex. He later wrote, "When I was about fifteen yards from the gate three armed men dashed out on horseback....I drew my pistol and waited to see what would happen if they were Carranzistas," soldiers of the Mexican provisional president Venustiano Carranza who were deadly enemies of Villa while also opposed to the American force being in Mexico.

In the high-pitched, screeching voice, that years later would be so well known to tens of thousands of Americans, Patton yelled, "Halt."

Hearing his order, the riders wheeled their horses and galloped directly at Patton and the other men with him. Patton later recounted that when the horsemen were about twenty yards away, "All three shot at me, one bullet threw gravel on me. I fired back with my new pistol, five times." Two of the bullets found their mark, one hitting the first rider in the arm and another rupturing the belly of one of the other horses.

Hearing the firing, Patton's men on the other side of the building came on the run, shooting rapidly. To get out of the line of friendly fire, Patton leaped back around the

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corner of the complex as three Villista bullets, possibly fired from one of the windows, smacked the wall by his head showering him with adobe dust.

As the young lieutenant caught his breath and reloaded his pistol, he spied Holmdahl and one of the drivers sprinting towards him. Patton swung back around the corner of the wall. "I saw a man on a horse come right in front of me, I started to shoot at him but remembered that Dave Allison had always said to shoot at the horse of an escaping man and I did so."

Dave Allison, a noted Texas law officer and range detective, had met Patton and exchanged a few drinks and tall stories with him while Patton was stationed with the Thirteenth Cavalry Regiment at Sierra Blanca, a west Texas cowtown not far from the Mexican border.

The advice proved sound as Patton's bullets "broke the horse's hip and he fell on his rider." "Impelled by misplaced notions of chivalry," Patton wrote, "I did not fire on the Mexican who was down until he disentangled himself and rose to fire." Holmdahl, however, had no such inhibitions. As the man attempted to stagger to his feet, the scout shot him from ten feet away, crumpling him to the ground in death.

The Mexican whose horse had been gutted by Patton's first shot was now up and running. Patton recalled, "I saw the man about 100 yards off, I shot three times at him with my rifle, four or five others fired also and he went down."

Meanwhile, the man who Patton had shot in the arm as he attempted to flee through the gate had wheeled his horse around and ridden back into the hacienda courtyard. Easing himself off his horse, dripping blood from his shattered arm, he ran into the ranch house and dashed to one of the back windows.

Pulling himself through the window he dropped to the ground. Firing his pistol with his one good arm he ran along a fence running at right angles to the road. He had gotten 300 yards away when Patton spotted him and yelled to one of the troopers.

Author's Collection

American cavalry, the backbone of Pershing's force, probed more than 200 miles into the mountains and desert of Chihuahua on the trail of Villa.

The soldier calmly wrapped the sling of his Springfield about his arm, took a bead on the running man and fired. The trooper shook his head and cursed as his first bullet missed. Aiming again he fired and the man dropped. Turning to Patton the trooper held up one finger and smiled. Patton later remembered, "It was remarkable how cool" the men were during the fight.

The wounded man lying face down, lifted his head and with an effort raised his left hand in a gesture of supplication and surrender. But as Holmdahl strode toward him his face twisted into a grimace of hate as he recognized the former Villista officer and with a final effort raised his pistol and fired.

Holmdahl, his sardonic grin never changing as a bullet sped past his ear, drew his pistol and coldly shot his old saddle-mate, Colonel Julio Cardenas, late commander of Villa's "Dorados," through the head. One of the civilian drivers, William Walker, later charged that Holmdahl was an adventurer who "killed for pleasure."

Cutthroat though he may have been, Cardenas died game. Aside from Patton's bullet that broke his right arm and Holmdahl's coup de grace to the head, the Villista officer had two bullets that ripped through his lungs. The trooper's first shot did not miss after all.

Not lingering at the bloody body of the dead colonel, Patton made a quick survey of the scene. Believing that Cardenas might have as many as thirty men with him, he realized his troops were vulnerable to fire coming down from the crenelated roof of the hacienda.

Spotting a dead tree trunk lying against the wall of the house, he ordered two of the troopers to prop it against the side of the building. Holstering his pistol and slinging his Springfield over his shoulder, Patton shinnied up the tree trunk and stepped out on the roof. It was his first mistake. For as he plunked his muscular body on the roof it collapsed under him and he dropped down to his armpits.

Wiggling free, he precariously

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perched himself on the shaky roof and scanned the deserted courtyard. Satisfied there were no more Villistas lurking about, he climbed down. As his men gathered around he ordered a room-by-room search of the ranch house and its outbuildings.

Not a rash fighter, Patton had brought before him the three men and a boy who throughout the fighting had ignored stray bullets whizzing by them and continued their job of skinning a cow. Pushing the cow skinners before him, he used them as a movable shield as the Americans searched the labyrinth of rooms in the large hacienda. Finding the rooms locked, to save time Patton used his revolver to shoot off the door locks of each room before entering.

In one room they found, silent and tight-lipped, the wife, now widow, of the Mexican colonel. She was holding his infant child in her arms. His mother stood beside her, staring defiantly at the soldier intruders. In another room they found two old women whimpering in a corner. A final search turned up a saber and a silver-mounted saddle which were quickly appropriated by the second lieutenant commanding as trophies of war.

The troopers collected the weapons of the three dead Villistas and stowed them in the autos. Then they hoisted the bodies, one to a car, spread them over the hoods, and tied them down.

Suddenly, one of the men gave a shout and pointed to a body of approximately forty horsemen heading their way at a gallop. Patton was not above putting discretion ahead of valor and weighing the odds he ordered his Dodge caravan to drive off at full speed. After a few miles when his pursuers were lost from sight he signaled for a halt.

Author's Collection

Pancho Villa, center, the raider of Columbus, New Mexico. Pershing, right, entered Mexico, scattering his army and sending Villa into hiding.

As the autos eased to a stop, Patton pointed to the telegraph lines paralleling the road. "Cut 'em," he ordered a trooper, who climbed a pole and severed the wires with a bayonet. As they drove back through Rubio on the way to Pershing's headquarters, the young lieutenant did not want a reception committee waiting for him. As it was, the trio of Dodge cars got some hateful stares as they passed through the little town.

About four o'clock that afternoon when they arrived at Pershing's headquarters they created a mild sensation. The little caravan bearing the bloody bodies stretched out on the hoods drove through the camp like a band of proud deer hunters displaying their kills. The other two corpses, other than Cardenas, were soon identified as Captain Isadore Lopez, a Villista veteran, and Private Juan Garza. On a plaintive note, in Lopez's shirt pocket they found an unfinished letter to his sweetheart.

Patton, in an ebullient letter to his wife back in El Paso wrote, "The General (Pershing) has been very complimentary telling some officers that I did more in half a day than the Thirteenth Cavalry did in a week ...You are probably wondering if my conscience hurts me for killing a man. It does not. I feel about it just as I did when I got my sword fish, surprised at my luck."

The American newspaper correspondents assigned to the Punitive Expedition jumped on the story and wrote gory dispatches that made the young lieutenant a national hero for a short time. One correspondent, Frank B. Elser of the *New York Times*, described the affair as "a fight that will go down as unique in the records of this expedition."

Patton, he pointed out, eschewed the regulation Colt .45 automatic pistol and dealt out death with his personal ivory-handled six-shooter revolver which he described as a "beautiful weapon." But Patton ruefully reported to his wife that his fellow officers were teasing him for shooting the bandits rather than sabering them.

Ironically, Patton, the last of the romantic cavaliers who sought glory charging on horseback with drawn sword, led the first American action where cavalry had dismounted from automobiles and fought on foot with rifle and pistol.

General Pershing, he told his wife, was jokingly referring to him as his "bandit." Other soldiers eyeing the Dodge autos with the tied on bodies dripping blood and gore came up with another nickname when an old cavalry colonel, "Old Pants" Johnson, looking from Patton's bloody uniform to the broken bodies of the Villistas remarked, "Look at the dirty bastards; look at the blood and guts on those dirty bastards." A legend was born.

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POWDER SPRINGS:

OUTLAW HIDEOUT

By Donna B. Ernst

Powder Springs, Wyoming, was an early hideout along the Outlaw Trail of the Old West. Used by famous outlaws including the Sundance Kid, Butch Cassidy, and Harvey Logan, as well as lesser-knowns such as Bert Charter and Isom Dart, the hideout became famous during the chase and capture of outlaws Harry Tracy and David Lant in 1898.

There are actually two Powder Springs, the Upper and the Lower. Both were used at one time or another by the outlaws, and neither is inhabited today.

Upper Powder Springs is located about two miles northeast of Lower Powder Springs, along a fork of Powder Wash, in a bowl-shaped valley just west of Powder Mountain. The upper springs are nestled in hills and rocks, while the terrain of the lower springs is just dusty flats. Except for the small oasis around each spring, nothing but sagebrush exists for miles.

Both Upper and Lower Powder Springs show signs of long-gone foundations, any might have been an outlaws' cabin. On the hillside of Lower Powder Springs, remnants of a dugout, the lodgepole and stone

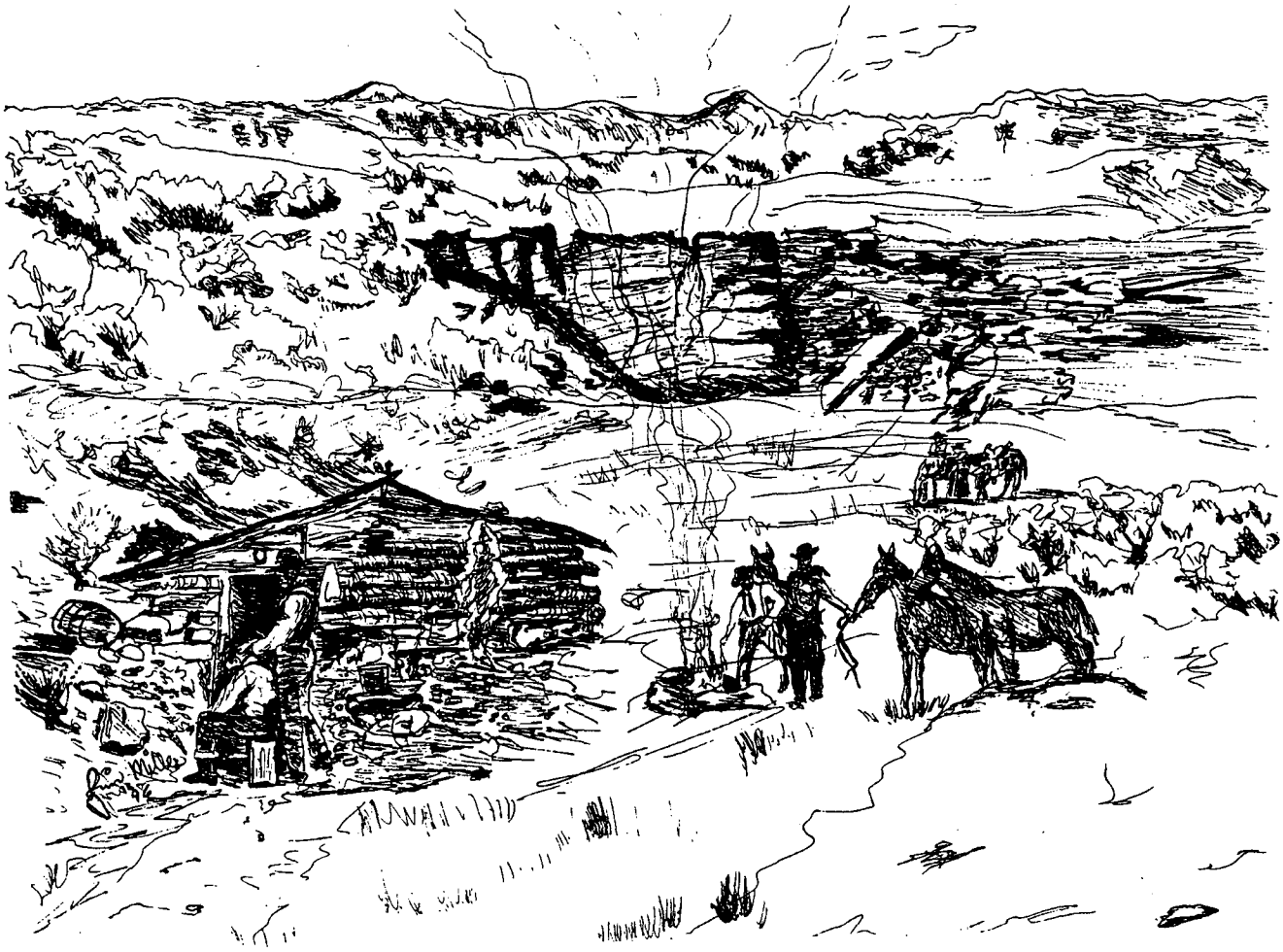

Illustration by Jim Miller

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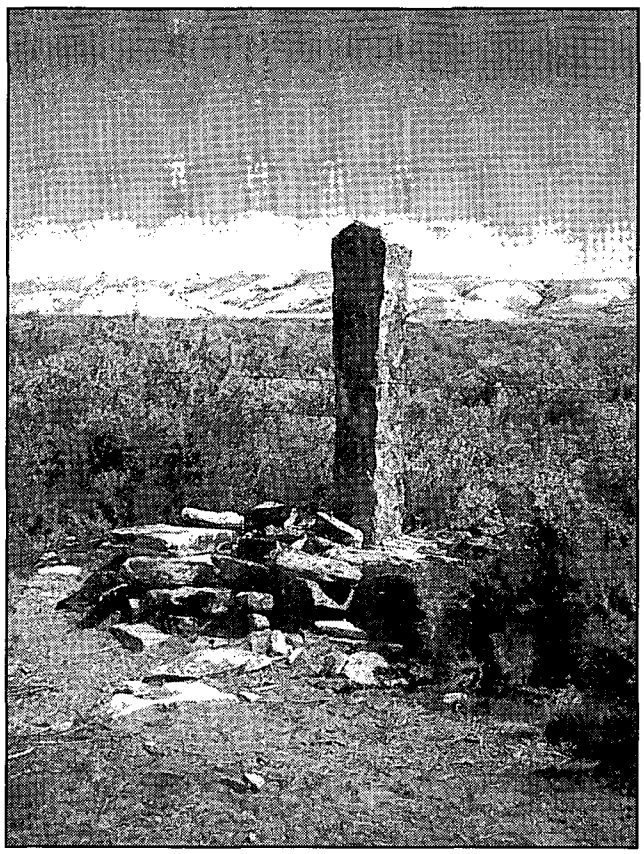
walls still set in place, are camouflaged with overgrowth.

The heyday of the Powder Springs hideout was during the 1890s. The law seldom came near the hideout; but if necessary, the outlaws were less than a mile from the next border and within a day's ride to friends in Baggs or Browns Park.

In August 1873, a government team led by A.V. Richards surveyed the Territory of Wyoming, the east line of which was obviously shared by the future state of Colorado. Between 1878 and 1879, Rollin J. Reeves monumented the points fixed earlier by the Richards team, and a stone marker was placed every mile along the Forty-first parallel.

While each marker was originally numbered in Richard's notes, only a few markers were actually imprinted. On August 20, 1878, sandstone marker number 223 was placed by Reeves in a ravine of the Red Desert. The five-foot marker was just over the ridge from the Lower Powder Springs hideout, providing a clear definition of safety to those hiding at the springs. It still stands today, and although quite weathered and worn, it is still readable.



Author's Collection

Wyoming State Marker 223, near Powder Springs.

As the crow flies, Powder Springs is located about forty miles west of Baggs, Wyoming, and forty miles northeast of Browns Park, Colorado. Researcher Diana Kouris of Browns Park further describes Powder Springs as "a stopping-off point for outlaws riding between Hole In The Wall, Wyoming, and Robbers Roost in Utah."

Browns Park, bordering Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming, was a well-known stop along the Outlaw Trail. The town of Baggs, located along the Little Snake River Valley, was an area less famous than Browns Park, but well-known by the many outlaws who frequented Powder Springs. Harry Longabaugh, alias the Sundance Kid, worked in the valley for rancher Al Reader between 1896 and 1898; Robert Leroy Parker, alias Butch Cassidy, was known locally as a leader of the Robbers' Roost Gang; and Harvey Logan, alias Kid Curry, often bought his horses from valley ranchers, such as Jim Ferguson and Jim Hansen.

Numerous cattle ranches along the fertile riverbed had become home to a growing number of outlaws laying low. While there, the outlaws were mostly well-behaved and accepted accordingly. They did occasionally shoot up the local bars, such as the Bull Dog Saloon in Baggs, but they also freely paid for all damages resulting from these celebrations, usually in gold or silver coin. One acquaintance, Jack Ryan, reportedly netted enough gold coin to move on to Rawlins and buy a new saloon near the train depot.

One of the earliest references to Powder Springs as an outlaw hideout was in July 1897.

On June 28, 1897, the Sundance Kid, Flatnose George Currie, Tom O'Day, Lonnie Logan, and Walt Punteney stole $97 from the Butte County Bank in Belle Fourche, South Dakota. O'Day was quickly captured, but the others escaped and headed for Baggs and the Powder Springs hideout for a short stay. There they joined Butch Cassidy and Elzy Lay, who had just held up the Pleasant Valley Coal Company in Castle Gate, Utah, on April 21. With $7,000 in their pockets, Cassidy and Lay decided to celebrate their success.

In Baggs, the gang found their old friend Billy Bender, an early settler, out at Powder Springs. He was known locally as the popular leader of the Powder Springs Gang. During these festivities, however, Bender happened to be quite ill with pneumonia. The gang members sent to Rawlins for a doctor, but Bender died before help came. When the doctor finally arrived in Baggs, the outlaws held a kangaroo court, accusing him of negligence and of causing Bender's death. Luckily for the doctor, the jurors sobered up somewhat and found him innocent.

The outlaws soon headed north to Montana where they were captured and taken to the Deadwood, South Dakota, jail. They escaped on October 31, 1897, and again raced for the safe haven at the Powder Springs hideout.

An article in the *Denver News* of February 27, 1898, claims that some of the Belle Fourche outlaws joined with the Powder Springs Gang to rustle cattle and drive them north to the Hole In The Wall, another outlaw hideout.

February 1898, also found outlaw Harry Tracy heading for Browns Park after a recent jailbreak from Utah. He joined a group of outlaws including Pat Johnson, who had just killed a Browns Park teenager named Willie Strang. A posse

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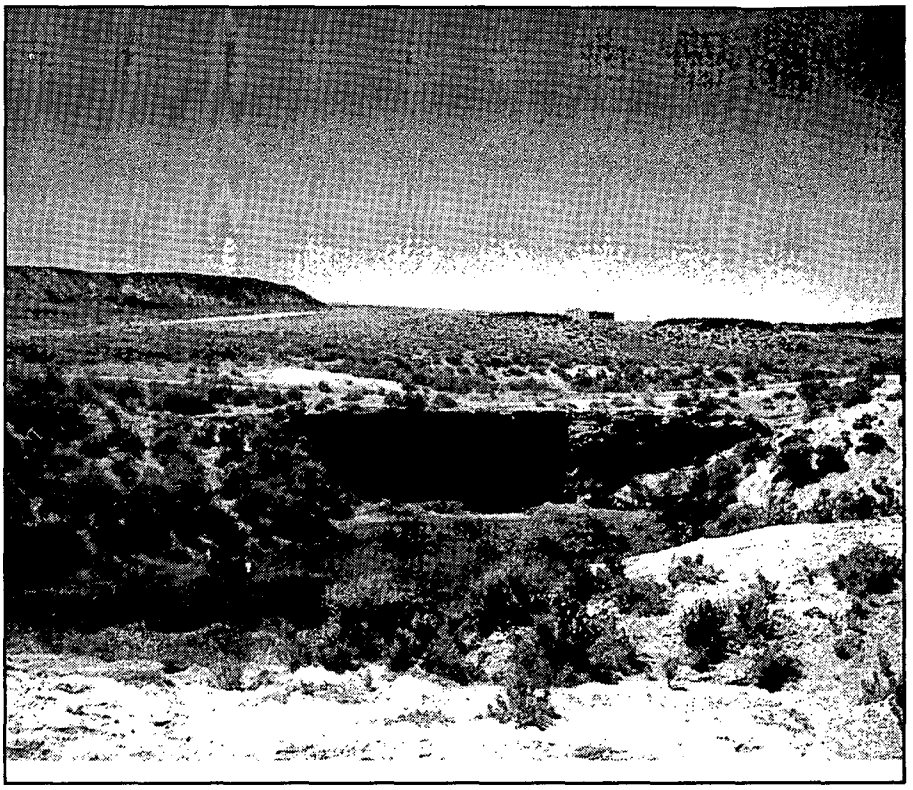
quickly gathered and tracked the gang to their campsite near Lodore Canyon, where a shootout occurred, and Valentine Hoy of Browns Park was killed. The outlaws escaped during the posse's retreat, but the posse easily followed the bloody, barefooted prints through the snow, over Douglas Mountain, and toward Powder Springs.

Finally, on March 4, 1898, Tracy, Johnson, and David Lant were again overtaken and captured on a desert flat near Powder Springs. Johnson was taken to Wyoming for trial, and Tracy and Lant were imprisoned at Hahn's Peak, Colorado. A fourth outlaw, John Bennett, was captured back at Browns Park and hung on the spot. This gruesome event became quite famous, and gave Powder Springs a very hard reputation with some local citizens.

The next reference to the Powder Springs hideout was in a letter from J.S. Hoy, brother of the deceased Valentine Hoy, to the *Denver News*. On March 6, 1898, Hoy angrily wrote condemning the lawlessness of the area. He further noted, "The Roost at Powder Springs consists of a dugout and a corral. The first of March the snow still covered the ground to the depth of a foot around and on the sides of the hills of the country known as Powder Springs." Area sheep ranchers often used large sleighs to transport supplies and hay over the deep snow. One of those abandoned sleighs, weathered and slowly rotting, lies today just 100 feet from state marker 223.

On July 24, 1898, Jeff Dunbar was killed in a gunfight at Jim Davis' saloon in Dixon, Wyoming. In his obituary, Dunbar was referred to as the leader of the gang of cattle rustlers from Powder Springs. The reporter claimed the gang had over 400 members, including Isom Dart, Bert Charter, and Butch Cassidy, who was expected to become the new leader.

Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch soon held up a Union Pacific train at the old Wilcox section house on June 2, 1899. The gang split up after the robbery, half heading north for the Hole In The Wall area. The others made a quick stop at Powder Springs for supplies before a fateful shootout near Horse Ranch, Wyoming, in which Sheriff Hazen was killed.



Author's Collection

Powders Springs, 1996.

The next group to use the Powder Springs hideout were the outlaws who stopped the Union Pacific at Tipton, Wyoming. This robbery involved a number of the Little Snake River Valley residents as well as the Wild Bunch members. Jim Ferguson, Jack Ryan, Bob Cruzan, Jim Hansen, and Bert Charter were all questioned by Pinkerton detectives and suspected of aiding the gang. The outlaws headed to Powder Springs with Sheriff Swanson of Sweetwater County, Wyoming, on their trail. However, he is said to have halted and returned to Rock Springs because Powder Springs was not an area he wished to enter.

The last reported outlaw activity in Powder Springs was also the last time the Wild Bunch frequented the Little Snake River Valley. On September 19, 1900, the Sundance Kid, Harvey Logan, Will Carver, and possibly Butch Cassidy robbed the bank in Winnemucca, Nevada. Within a month, Sundance and Butch showed up at the Powder Springs hideout.

Very little remains today to mark the hideout where robbery plans were made, success was celebrated, and a different code of honor was law. The Powder Springs Gang grew out of a local band of rustlers and dissolved into the dust of a modern world where the Old West outlaw no longer roamed.

To get to Powder Springs today, drive south from Baggs, Wyoming, on Route 789; turn right and head west on Moffet County Road 4 (the Four Mile/ZIZ Road) until you reach Moffet County Road 62, and turn right. At Powder Wash, Colorado, turn right again, drive about three miles, and bear right at a bend in the road. The springs with their vivid green, waist-high grasses appear immediately below and to the right of the ledge of rimrock that creates the road.

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A different kind of Roundup

Roundup, by Rick Steber. (Bonanza Publishing, Box 204, Prineville, Oregon 97754. $29.95 hard bound; $17.50 paper. 160 pages. Photos, illustrations.)

Edwin "Buster" Billings excelled in rodeos despite losing his left arm while playing with dynamite in 1932 when he was fifteen. His biggest regret, though, is the fact that he never married.

"You get older," he says, "live out by yourself like I do, the loneliness eats at your soul."

Writer and photographer Rick Steber rounds up the stories of Billings and pioneer men and women like him in his latest book.

In his 1994 book, *Oregon Trail — Last of the Pioneers,* Steber tracked down and recorded the memories of the last travelers over the famous trail. *Roundup* is the third book in Steber's Heart of the West Series (*Heartwood,* 1991, was the first), and Steber succeeds again by simply letting his subjects tell their stories in their own way.

"*Roundup,*" Steber writes in the introduction, "brings together a company of rugged western individuals, men and women who have devoted their lives to working with horses."

And they're all here, too—farmers, freighters, homesteaders, ranchers, rodeo riders, etc.—twenty in all, with Steber's sharp black-and-white photographs and Arizona artist Don Gray's illustrations.

"Working with horses" is a broad subject, thus *Roundup* lacks the focus of *Oregon Trail — Last of the Pioneers,* and the misspellings of the New Mexico towns of Fort Sumner and Deming are annoying.

On the other hand, it's easy to be moved by some of the stories. A.L. Duckett drove a stagecoach as late as 1926 and works in his son's metal fabrication shop at the age of 102. As a young woman, Ollie Osborn, born in 1896, was a bronc rider and bulldogger in cowgirl rodeos and even worked in a wild west show.

And horse trader Del Harmon learned to judge horses by touch after a riding accident left him blind. "It wasn't a gift I was born with," Harmon says. "It took me a while to develop it. But I enjoy eating—so I learned."

Some of the stories are too long while others leave the reader wanting more, but *Roundup* is an overall success.—*Johnny D. Boggs, Dallas, Texas.*

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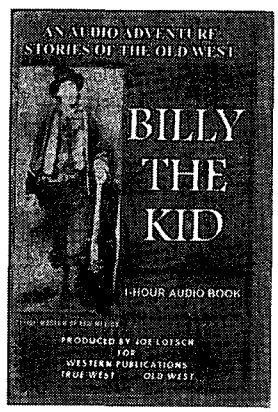

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For Better or Worse

Army Wives on the American Frontier: Living by the Bugle, by Anne Brunet Eales. (Johnson Books, 1880 South 57th Court, Boulder, Colorado 80301. $16.95 paper bound.)

At Fort Rice in the Dakota Territory, future army wife Katie Gibson liked to look at pictures in her family album to relieve her homesickness. One day, two visiting children from the garrison looked at the pictures with her. Intrigued by the picture of an elderly man, they asked who it was:

> She replied that it was her father and that he was dead. The little boy asked, "Who killed him?" Katie considered it a reasonable question, "for no one died a natural death out there, but was killed either by Indians, or in barroom brawls, or frozen to death." When she responded that no one killed him, the children were puzzled by the novel idea that someone could die of old age. The little girl finally realized, "No one killed him...he just died his own self."

With stories like this, Eales' study of army wives is lively and readable. Herself a modern-day army wife, Eales has great empathy for these women and the hardships they endured because she sees similarities in their lives. Forced to be independent when their men are away, be it at the Battle of Little Big Horn or the Desert War, army wives "pursue careers, take children to have broken bones set, attend classes on how to keep the family car running, and learn about fuses, hot-water heaters, and self-propelled lawnmowers that aren't"—or the nineteenth-century equivalent.

Patricia Stallard's now classic study, *Glittering Misery: Dependents of the Indian Fighting Army,* covered the broad range of women and included a great deal about laun-

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dresses and enlisted men's wives. Eales narrows her focus to officers' wives because they had the education to produce journals, memoirs, and letters. Because of her extensive research into these primary sources, Eales' bibliography is one of the most valuable parts of this book. She relies on the familiar—Libbie Custer, Martha Summerhayes, Frances Grummond, Edith Griefson—but she also recounts incidents from women lesser known, such as Katie Garrett.

The book is topically arranged, so that no one woman's life is followed chronologically. Instead, Eales looks at living quarters, the lack of servants, the value of single women on the frontier, sickness, medical care and death, the "Indian problem," and other topics dear to the frontier wife's heart. In some ways her book deals with the women's lives more intimately than did Stallard's study, discussing for instance forbidden conversations on birth control and the introduction of the new rubber condom.

But basically, her point is the same: Life was difficult on the frontier for these women who were transported not only from comfortable homes back east but from a world where Victorian ideas of right and wrong made life's decisions clearcut. On the frontier, there were no such guidelines of behavior and the wives invented as they went along. Most survived, some even enjoying the challenges, but a few were not up to it. Eales casts an even eye on all of them.—*Judy Alter, Fort Worth Texas.*

Pecos Cowboy

Cowboy of the Pecos by Patrick Dearen. (Republic of Texas Press, 1506 Capital Avenue, Plano, Texas 75074. $12.95 paper bound. 245 pages; 39 photographs.)

I had to pause between chapters of this book to brush the gritty aftertaste of red Pecos river water from my mouth and check my bed for scorpions. I grew up as a cowboy in the alkali basins of southwestern Colorado and considered myself to be a pretty good hand—until I read this book. I'm heading back to New Something (York or Jersey) with my jar of Brand X Picante Sauce under my arm and my scruffy tail tucked between my legs. I certainly don't belong in the company of real Pecos cowboys.

Patrick Dearen has meticulously researched, compiled, and written a fascinating book about the denizens of one of the harshest regions of the Southwest. This book jumps, or rather leaps to life through his interviews with "them that was thar or them that knew them that was thar."

The book's rich narrative is amply augmented by archival and recent photos, unfortunately all in black and white, which certainly aid the reader in picturing both the area and the cowboys. The persona include the famous—Charles Goodnight, Oliver Loving, and John Chisum—but the book captures one's interest by viewing the asperity of the early days on the trail with the massive herds through the eyes of the real heroes, the common drovers who choked on the alkali dust, drank the putrid river water, and fought the Kiowas, Comanches, and Mescaleros. The book truly narrates the conception and birth of an American myth, the cowboy. These cowhands unwittingly created the images, burned as deeply into our national psyche as a running iron brand, and still carried throughout the world today on screen and paper. Farmers in Africa and bureaucrats in Japan may not know who the president of the United States is but they recognize the American cowboy. I will never again be able to watch another round of Mesquite Championship Rodeo without paying silent homage to the cowhands of the Pecos.

The book has a few very forgivable flaws. Historical sequence is sometimes disrupted with extracontextual interview quotes. Some of the Pecos colloquialisms could perhaps have been made more understandable using editorial comment or explanation. I grew increasingly uneasy with the term "beeves,' expecting Gil Favor or Rowdy Yates

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to pop up in the next paragraph. History buff that I am, it is difficult for me to fault anyone for detailed research and documentation and never would I accuse this book for lacking in either. It's accurate to a fault, those faults sometimes being a distracting amount of anecdote, episode, and superscript. At times, I felt like I was simultaneously interviewing twenty or thirty loud cowboys inside a bucket.

When I finished Mr. Dearen's book I had saddle sores, a screw worm problem, sunburn, frostbite, diarrhea, and couldn't wait to get to a toothbrush. I just love that kind of a book. I plan to read it again—right after I get dipped for ticks. Thanks, Patrick!—*Richard Davis, Olathe, Colorado.*

Raising Hell and Trading Horses

Hank Vaughan (1849-1893): A Hell-Raising Horse Trader of the Bunchgrass Territory, by Jon M. & Donna McDaniel Skovlin. (Reflections Publishing Co., P.O. Box 121, Cove, Oregon 97824. $26.95 hard bound; $16.95 paper bound. 40 illustrations.)

Authors Jon and Donna Skovlin will be new to most western buffs. A few articles have appeared by them, but this is their first book. It was not an easy task to reconstruct the life of Hank Vaughan, as few men were concerned about the paper trails they left. The research involved years of painstaking reading of newspapers on microfilm, scouring through other prime source materials such as government documents, court records, manuscript collections, as well as various secondary sources. Much of the original wording of these documents has been retained to maintain the original flavor of the times.

For a man known today basically as a horsethief it is remarkable the Skovlins were able to flesh out Vaughan so he emerges as a real human with many of the weaknesses the majority of humanity has. In a time when the only real social activity centered in the saloon it is not surprising that liquor became a big part of his life. Under the influence he became embroiled, which contributed to his leading a life of desperadoism. Instead of working for an honest wage he found the lure of easily acquired horseflesh irresistible. With thievery came the law, and it was while resisting the law as a teenager that he killed a deputy and was sentenced to life in prison. Ironically it was during his prison term, which lasted only four and a half years, that he acquired a good education. He never again found himself in prison; although he always was on the edge of lawlessness.

Vaughan became known as the "boss horse thief" of the Northwest, and it is by this aspect of his reputation which he is best known. He was more than a horsethief, however. By marrying into the McCarty family, he contributed to that gang's bank-robbing efforts. However, he was also a farmer and operated the first wheat farm on the Umatilla Indian reservation. If he had been able to avoid liquor, he no doubt could have controlled his inclination to laugh at the law and become a pillar of the community.

The Skovlins spent some thirty years researching and writing this biography of desperado Hank Vaughan. Although no biography is ever definitive, it is difficult to believe that any additional significant information about Vaughan will be discovered. Certainly students of Old West characters and the development of law and order in frontier lands will find this work indispensable.

We are richer for the Skovlins having provided this biography. We look forward to their next effort, which will focus on the outlaw McCarty family.—*Chuck Parsons, Yorktown, Texas.*

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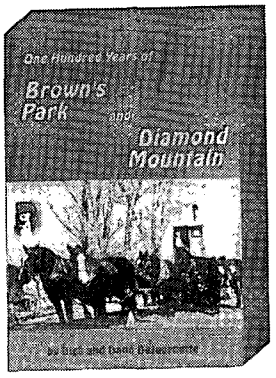

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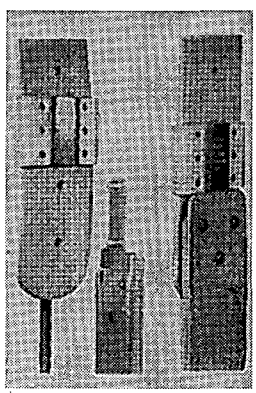

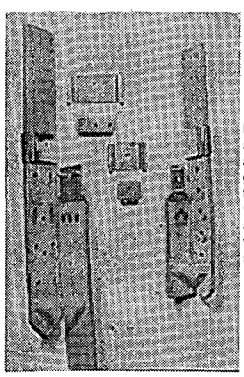

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THE LOST GUNS OF B.

One of the most interesting aspects of writing this column has been meeting, through the mail, people who are descendants of men and women who contributed to the "Winning of the West." Some are not proud of their ancestors, yet some are. Recently I received a question from Thomas L. Outlaw, Des Plaines, Illinois. Mr. Outlaw wrote seeking information about his great uncle, B.L. "Bass" Outlaw. He also has hopes of locating any of Outlaw's guns.

Outlaw is remembered by most people as a Texas Ranger during the 1880s and early 1890s who, in a drunken row, shot and killed a fellow Ranger, Joe McKidrict. Outlaw was then killed by John Selman, who not long after killed John Wesley Hardin. Many writers have considered Outlaw a man good with a gun but who became a violent killer under the influence of alcohol.

Thomas Outlaw had found some material on his ancestor but hopes to learn more. The following is a brief sketch of his life, and hopefully readers will be able to contribute more information.

His real name was not "Bass" but Baz Lamar Outlaw. According to his own statements, he was born in Lee County, Georgia, in 1859. He received at least the common education of the times, as letters of his exist, proving he was literate. Although no details are known, he may have gotten into trouble in Georgia, which may explain his travel westward.

During the 1870s, Outlaw was probably working his way west. By 1880 he was in Kimble County, Texas, as the census listed him as a farmer, age twenty-three, suggesting a birth year of 1857. He was living with a William Estes, a freighter, and both men were single.

Farming apparently did not suit Outlaw, because on August 11, 1885, he enlisted in Company E of the Frontier Battalion of the Texas Rangers at Toyah, Texas. Within a year he was in a gunfight in which he wounded Jim Davenport, who had been charged with murder. Davenport got away, but with a bullet in his side.

In 1887 the owner of the Fronteriza silver mine at Sierra del Carmen, in the state of Coahuila, Mexico, requested the Rangers to send three of the toughest men in Texas to guard shipments. Outlaw, John R. Hughes, and Walter Durbin volunteered for the task, suggesting that Outlaw was at the very least a brave man. The trio indeed prevented robberies, but on this occasion Outlaw exhibited the problem that would ultimately cost him his life: drunkenness. Outlaw went on a drunken rampage and killed one of the workmen at the mine. Luckily for the Rangers, the other miners thanked them because Outlaw's victim was considered an undesirable and not a loss at all.

Captain Frank Jones promoted Outlaw and Hughes to the rank of corporal in April 1890. When Sergeant Charles Fusselman was murdered on April 17, Outlaw was promoted to his rank. The fact that he was given responsibilities of leadership suggests his superiors had high regard for his ability. If drunkenness was a problem for Baz L. Outlaw, then it was not yet so detrimental to his work as to be of concern to Ranger officers.

In late 1890 Captain Hughes sought to capture the cattle rustling Odle brothers. He chose to take with him Outlaw, Ira Aten, and a deputy sheriff. Shortly after midnight on Christmas Eve the brothers rode into the Ranger ambush. Rather than surrendering they resisted and both were killed.

In the fall of 1891, Outlaw, with

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several other Rangers, tracked down six bandits who had held up a train near Sanderson, Texas. The Rangers captured part of the gang; although one outlaw killed himself rather than be apprehended. Three others were arrested to face charges. The others got away.

On September 18, 1892, after a drunken altercation with an ex-Ranger, Outlaw wrote out his resignation at the request of Captain Jones. This is the first time on record that his weakness for booze interfered with the performance of his duties.

But all was not lost because on February 10, 1893, Outlaw took the oath of a Special Texas Ranger. One of his sponsors was the man who had requested his resignation, Captain Frank Jones.

Besides his work as a Ranger, Outlaw obtained a deputy United States marshal's commission. When Dick Ware, who had earned fame for his role in the fight with the Sam Bass gang in 1878, was named United States marshal for the Western District of Texas, the people around Alpine petitioned him to allow Outlaw to stay in the area because they had such high confidence in him. Ware didn't like Outlaw but respected the wishes of the citizens and left him assigned to Alpine.

It was on April 5, 1894, in El Paso, that Outlaw's career ended in gunsmoke. He was drunk at Tillie Howard's parlor house and fired his pistol—violating a city ordinance. Ex-Ranger Joe McKidrict ran up to arrest him, but Outlaw shot him. Outlaw was then shot by officer John Selman in a deadly exchange. One of Outlaw's shots was so close to Selman that the flash nearly blinded him. He later could barely see at night due to the effects of the fight.

Outlaw undoubtedly suffered from the abuses of alcohol, but he

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Author's Collection

Captain Frank Jones, seated, and his company of Texas Rangers at Realtos, Texas, 1888. From left: Sergeant Ira Aten, Frank Schmid, Charles Fusselman, Charles Barton, Wood Saunders (behind Captain Jones), John R. Hughes, Walter Durbin, Baz Lamar Outlaw (light shirt, black hat), Jim Robinson, Ernest Rogers, and Jerry "Dude" Jones.

did contribute to the establishment of law and order in a wild land. Because of the abuse his life ended tragically.

There have been no books written about Outlaw, and hopefully some historian, such as R.K. DeArment, will accept the assignment.

The Lost Gun of the Kid

Recently a letter came inquiring about a Billy the Kid pistol, but with no name on the letter. I guess I am not the only one suffering from forgetfulness! The question was, "What happened to the weapons the Kid had with him the night he was killed by Pat Garrett ?"

Although some have written that the Kid was unarmed when shot in the dark, in reality he had a knife in one hand and a pistol in the other. He was on guard, but hesitated a second too long and died as a result.

The Kid's knife? A Bowie knife was on display in the Lincoln County courthouse for many years, but about 1970 it was stolen and no one knows where it is. There was no provenance on the knife so it probably was not authentic. Although it is easy to say that the Kid carried a Bowie knife, an article in *The New Southwest and Grant County Herald* of July 23, 1881, published in Silver City, New Mexico, stated the Kid was carrying a butcher knife, certainly not the same as a Bowie knife!

The pistol he was carrying was probably picked up by Garrett. There is a pistol in the William S. Hart museum in California which is claimed to be the pistol Billy carried, but the serial number is too late for that to be true. There is also a "Billy" .41 caliber Colt double-action "Thunderer" in the Sander's Museum in Berryvale, Kansas.

But, no one knows for sure what happened to the knife or the pistol!

Tombstone Triggerman

Recently I was asked by Charlene Ives Nelson, San Antonio, Texas, if I had ever heard of a man named Lark Ferguson.

It is believed that Elliott Larkin Ferguson was born about 1853 in east Texas or Louisiana. Virtually nothing is known about his parents or early life, although he had had some schooling because he could read and write.

We first learn of Ferguson on the right side of the law when Warren Wallace organized a ranging company in early 1874 to protect the southern Texas frontier against marauders. This was similar to the companies of the Frontier Battalion, but the Texas Rangers were not officially organized until later that year.

Captain Wallace organized a militia of fifty men, and when the group elected its officers, Lark Ferguson was chosen as second lieutenant. The group did good service on the Rio Grande frontier, but Ferguson seems to have gotten into difficulty more often than any other. On August 8, he and a Mexican got into a fight and both were arrested. Ferguson was kept with the company but the Mexican was placed in the Logartaville, Live Oak County, jail. During the night a mob rushed the jail and shot the prisoner to pieces. One wonders if Ranger Ferguson led the mob.

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The Wallace company of "rangers" disbanded on October 2, 1874. What Ferguson did next is unknown for certain, but five years later he was a fugitive from justice, evading charges of murder as well as theft. He was reputed to have been involved in the Goliad bank robbery in 1876. Live Oak County authorities wanted him for a horse theft committed on August 1, 1875. He was indicted on February 29, 1876. Ranger Lee Hall had papers for the arrest of Ferguson for murder. Reportedly he was laying low working for cattleman George Littlefield in the Texas Panhandle. It was rumored he had killed several Mexicans along the Rio Grande.

Not long after this, and perhaps because of pressure from the Texas Rangers, Ferguson left Texas and appeared in Arizona under the name of Pete Spence. He became an associate of the so-called "cowboy element" consisting of the Clantons, the McLaurys, John Ringo, Frank Stilwell, and others.

On September 8, 1881, the Bisbee, Arizona, stagecoach was held up by two men, allegedly Pete Spence and Frank Stilwell. The charge against them was later dropped. On March 18, 1882, Morgan Earp was murdered while playing pool. Wyatt Earp believed that Spence and Stilwell were the trigger men.

Spence later went to Yuma prison for aggravated assault. He entered as prisoner number 885 for a five-year sentence beginning on June 10, 1893. At the time one newspaper reporter wrote this about the man: "Pete Spence [is] a well-known character in Arizona...never knew what danger meant...Pete is a generous man and his great fault lies in the too ready use of his gun." Ferguson/Spence was eventually pardoned. He died sometime in the early 1900s.

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WILD OLD

THE KIL

Editor's note: *From June 1, 1897, to October 15, 1914, Alfred James Mokler was the Editor of the* Natrona County Tribune *in Wyoming. In that capacity, Mokler gathered many stories from the wild and woolly West that surrounded him. In 1923, the stories were collected and published as the* History of Natrona County, Wyoming: 1888-1922. *One of these stories is retold here by historian Larry Underwood*

The Old West was a hard place. Sometimes those families that came West to find their fortune failed. Cholera and other diseases killed too many. Snake bites could kill. Accidents often took lives. Drowning was not uncommon. Too many times, children died or were orphaned.

Homesteading was hard work and hard work sometimes killed. Often there was nothing left of a hard-luck family. except a few children. It then became necessary to hire out. Do a man's work. Grow up quick. Or in the case of a girl, marry early. Do a woman's work.

For one reason or another, working for a living, doing a man's work, is the predicament in which fourteen-year-old Virgil Turner found himself in late summer 1891. Turner and thirty-five-year-old ranch foreman Deitleff Kramhoft were in the cow corral doing the chores on the V-V Ranch. It was Monday evening, September 21, 1891.

Kramhoft took offense at something young Turner did and began cursing the lad and threatened to whip him. In the process, Kramhoft called the boy "some vile names."

Turner was frightened of the angry big man and ran straight to the bunkhouse where there was a .22 caliber target gun. The gun was

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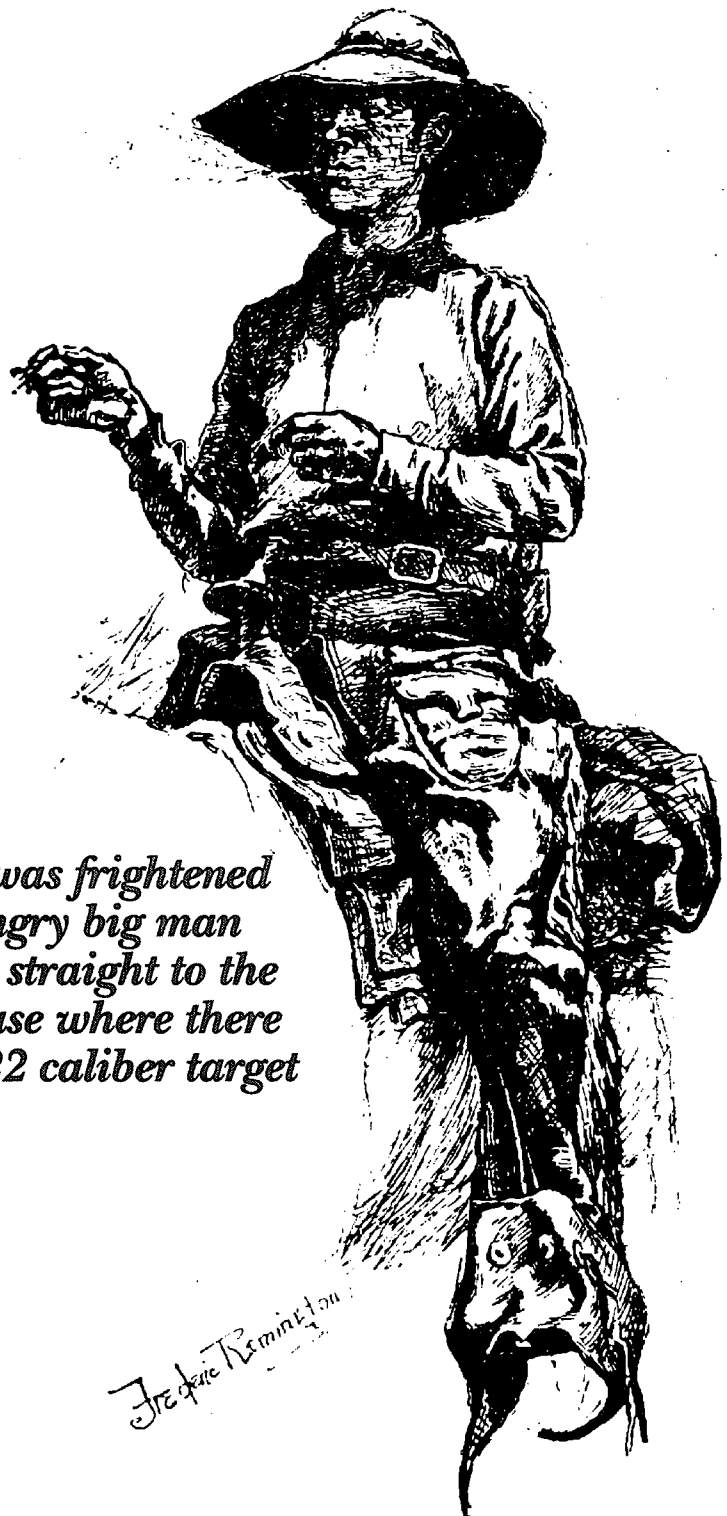

Turner was frightened of the angry big man and ran straight to the bunkhouse where there was a .22 caliber target gun.

By Larry Underwood

IN THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *OLD WEST*:

The Ungentle Passing of Mr. Rigney: Vigilantism in Miles City, Montana. **By Robin Gerber.** A hot time is had by all when an outlaw gang torches a town in retaliation for the lynching of their leader.

Vengeance Rode Many Horses. **By Brad Prowse.** A man embroiled in the infamous Pleasant Valley War eliminates half a dozen horses in his quest for vengeance.

Old West Gunsmith: Hall Breechloader. **By Randy D. Smith.** The evolution of the first military rifle is examined, from use with the dragoons to the Civil War.

Pioneer Journalists in Revolutionary Texas. **By Gary Brown.** Prior to the Texas Revolution, nine newspapers were published in the area now known as Texas. Most of these papers featured a colorful group of pioneer journalists.

Women Who Changed the West. **By Kristina Harris.** While nineteenth century women may not have fought wars or bought land, they had a sure hand in the development of the West.

Pioneer Customs. **By Shirley Gilfert.** Before the television and radio, homesteaders found more than one way to entertain themselves in the western territories.

LOOK FOR THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *OLD WEST* ON THE NEWSSTAND APRIL 15.

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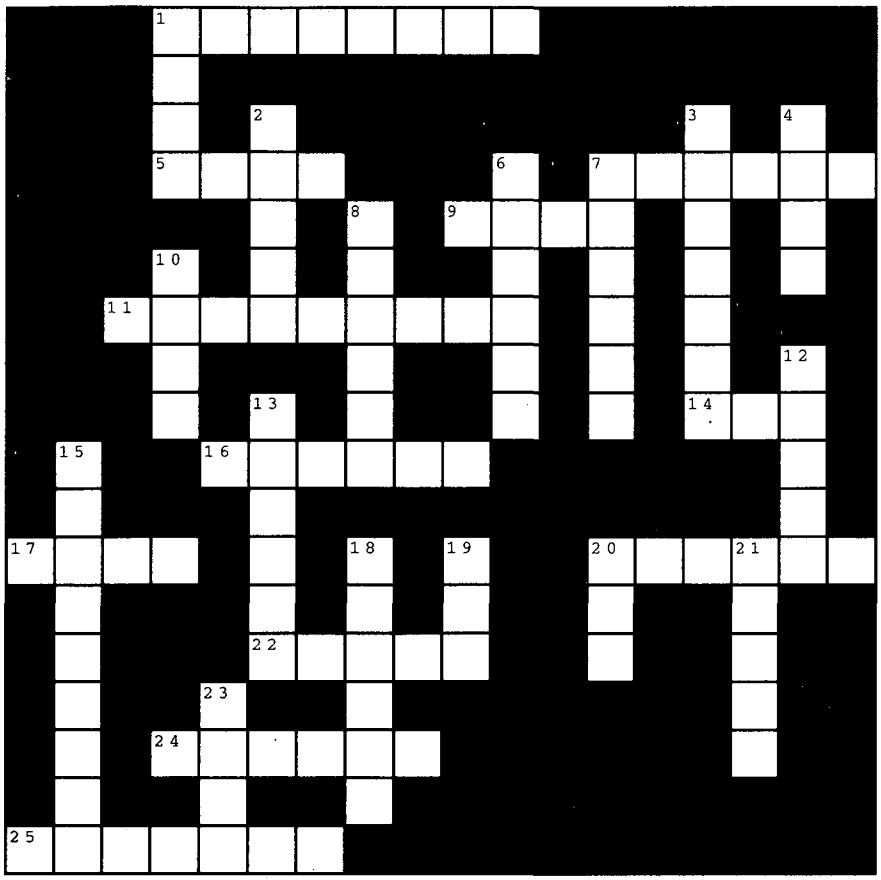


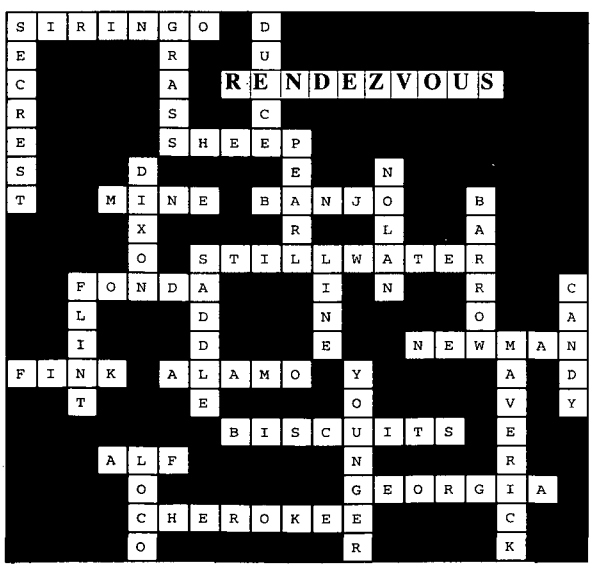
Across

1. The whole lot
5. Grizzly, black, or Smokey
7. Butch's real last name
9. Spanish for parlor
11. Long-shanked spur
14. Spanish for river
16. Stephen Watts _____
17. Gulch or ravine
20. "Run for the ____"
22. Poor horse
24. Lumberjack
25. Flatboat driver

Down

1. Corn storage shed
2. Jesse and Frank
3. Tenderfoot
4. Rope material
6. Colorado cannibal
7. Pershing's young lieutenant
8. Tuberculosis sufferer
10. To handle cattle
12. Wyatt Earp's widow
13. Matt Dillon's deputy
15. Short-tailed horse
18. Crooked card game
19. Mouthy Clanton brother
20. W.B. Masterson
21. Kansas cattle hub
23. Made all men equal

Solution in next month's True West



Solution to the March puzzle

loaded and Turner wheeled and aimed it at Kramhoft just as he burst through the bunkhouse door. Waving the rifle, Turner demanded that Kramhoft take back his words.

Kramhoft cursed at the boy again, then leaped forward to grab hold of the rifle barrel. They struggled and Turner managed to pull the trigger. Kramhoft was hit. He felt the burning in his left side. Turner went for help and Kramhoft was taken to a physician in Casper.

Turner had served about half his sentence when in the early morning of the first of November, the unexpected happened.

The next day, Kramhoft was questioned. He related the story just as Turner had told it. Kramhoft asked that Turner not be punished.

Nevertheless, Turner was charged and taken to Douglas and jailed. The law would hold him and wait to determine the extent of Kramhoft's wound.

By October 14, Kramhoft was better. It looked as if he'd survive. Court was to be held in Casper and Justice G.E. Butler was to preside over Turner's trial. G.B. McCalmont defended Turner. The prosecution asked to change the information from a felony to assault and battery. Turner then pled guilty of the lesser crime and was sentenced to three months in the Douglas jail.

Turner had served about half his sentence when in the early morning of the first of November, the unexpected happened. Kramhoft died. He was buried that evening.

Despite the death of Kramhoft, Virgil Turner served out the rest of his term and returned to Casper and resided there for the rest of the decade. "He was a good citizen."

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VOLUME 11	VOLUME 12	VOLUME 13	VOLUME 14	VOLUME 15	VOLUME 16	VOLUME 17	VOLUME 18	VOLUME 19	VOLUME 20
ct 1963 NA	#65 Oct 1964 $4.00	#71 Oct 1965 $4.00	#77 Oct 1966 $4.00	#83 Oct 1967 $6.00	#89 Oct 1968 $6.00	#95 Oct 1969 $4.00	#101 Oct 1970 $4.00	#107 Oct 1971 $4.00	#113 Oct 1972 $4.00
ec 1963 NA	#66 Dec 1964 $6.00	#72 Dec 1965 $4.00	#78 Dec 1966 $4.00	#84 Dec 1967 $6.00	#90 Dec 1968 $4.00	#96 Dec 1969 $4.00	#102 Dec 1970 $4.00	#108 Dec 1971 $4.00	#114 Dec 1972 $4.00
eb 1964 $4.00	#67 Feb 1965 $4.00	#73 Feb 1966 NA	#79 Feb 1967 $4.00	#85 Feb 1968 NA	#91 Feb 1969 $4.00	#97 Feb 1970 $4.00	#103 Feb 1971 $4.00	#109 Feb 1972 $4.00	#115 Feb 1973 $4.00
pr 1964 $4.00	#68 Apr 1965 $4.00	#74 Apr 1966 $4.00	#80 Apr 1967 $4.00	#86 Apr 1968 $4.00	#92 Apr 1969 $4.00	#98 Apr 1970 $4.00	#104 Apr 1971 $4.00	#110 Apr 1972 $4.00	#116 Apr 1973 $4.00
un 1964 $4.00	#69 Jun 1965 $6.00	#75 Jun 1966 $4.00	#81 Jun 1967 $4.00	#87 Jun 1968 NA	#93 Jun 1969 $4.00	#99 Jun 1970 $4.00	#105 Jun 1971 $4.00	#111 Jun 1972 $4.00	#117 Jun 1973 $4.00
ug 1964 $4.00	#70 Aug 1965 $4.00	#76 Aug 1966 $4.00	#82 Aug 1967 $4.00	#88 Aug 1968 $6.00	#94 Aug 1969 $4.00	#100 Aug 1970 $6.00	#106 Aug 1971 $4.00	#112 Aug 1972 $4.00	#118 Aug 1973 $4.00

VOLUME 21	VOLUME 22	VOLUME 23	VOLUME 24	VOLUME 25	VOLUME 26	VOLUME 27	VOLUME 28	VOLUME 29	VOLUME 30
Oct 1973 $4.00	#125 Oct 1974 $4.00	#131 Oct 1975 $4.00	#137 Oct 1976 NA	#143 Oct 1977 $4.00	#149 Oct 1978 $4.00	#155 Oct 1979 $4.00	#161 Oct 1980 $4.00	#172 Jan 1982 $4.00	#184 Jan1983 $4.00
Dec 1973 $4.00	#126 Dec 1974 $4.00	#132 Dec 1975 $4.00	#138 Dec 1976 $4.00	#144 Dec 1977 $4.00	#150 Dec 1978 $4.00	#156 Dec 1979 $4.00	#162 Dec 1980 $4.00	#173 Feb 1982 $4.00	#185 Feb 1983 $4.00
Feb 1974 $4.00	#127 Feb 1975 $4.00	#133 Feb 1976 $4.00	#139 Feb 1977 $4.00	#145 Feb 1978 $4.00	#151 Feb 1979 $4.00	#157 Feb 1980 $6.00	#163 Feb 1981 $4.00	#174 Mar 1982 $4.00	#186 Mar 1983 $4.00
pr 1974 $4.00	#128 Apr 1975 $4.00	#134 Apr 1976 $4.00	#140 Apr 1977 $4.00	#146 Apr 1978 $4.00	#152 Apr 1979 $4.00	#158 Apr 1980 $4.00	#164 Apr 1981 $4.00	#175 Apr 1982 $4.00	#187 Apr 1983 $4.00
un 1974 $4.00	#129 Jun 1975 $6.00	#135 Jun 1976 $4.00	#141 Jun 1977 $4.00	#147 Jun 1978 $4.00	#153 Jun 1979 $4.00	#159 Jun 1980 $4.00	#165 Jun 1981 $4.00	#176 May 1982 $4.00	#188 May 1983 $4.00
ug 1974 $4.00	#130 Aug 1975 $4.00	#136 Aug 1976 $4.00	#142 Aug 1977 $4.00	#148 Aug 1978 $4.00	#154 Aug 1979 $4.00	#160 Aug 1980 $4.00	#166 Jul 1981 $4.00	#177 Jun 1982 $4.00	#189 Jun 1983 $6.00
							#167 Aug 1981 $4.00	#178 Jul 1982 $4.00	#190 Jul 1983 $4.00
							#168 Sep 1981 $4.00	#179 Aug 1982 $4.00	#191 Aug 1983 $4.00
							#169 Oct 1981 $4.00	#180 Sep 1982 $4.00	#192 Sep 1983 $4.00
							#170 Nov 1981 $4.00	#181 Oct 1982 $4.00	#193 Oct 1983 $4.00
							#171 Dec 1981 $4.00	#182 Nov 1982 $4.00	#194 Nov 1983 $4.00
								#183 Dec 1982 $4.00	#195 Dec 1983 $6.00

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an 1984 $4.00	#205 Jan 1985 $4.00	#213 Jan 1986 $4.00	#225 Jan 1987 $4.00	#237 Jan 1988 $4.00	#249 Jan 1989 $4.00	#261 Jan 1990 $4.00	#273 Jan 1991 $4.00	#285 Jan 1992 $4.00	#297 Jan 1993 NA
eb 1984 $4.00	#206 Mar 1985 NA	#214 Feb 1986 $4.00	#226 Feb 1987 $4.00	#238 Feb 1988 $4.00	#250 Feb 1989 $6.00	#262 Feb 1990 $6.00	#274 Feb 1991 $4.00	#286 Feb 1992 $4.00	#298 Feb 1993 $4.00
Mar 1984 $4.00	#207 May 1985 $4.00	#215 Mar 1986 $4.00	#227 Mar 1987 $4.00	#239 Mar 1988 $4.00	#251 Mar 1989 $6.00	#263 Mar 1990 $4.00	#275 Mar 1991 $4.00	#287 Mar 1992 $4.00	#299 Mar 1993 $4.00
pr 1984 $4.00	#208 Jul 1985 $4.00	#216 Apr 1986 $4.00	#228 Apr 1987 $6.00	#240 Apr 1988 $4.00	#252 Apr 1989 NA	#264 Apr 1990 $4.00	#276 Apr 1991 $4.00	#288 Apr 1992 $4.00	#300 Apr 1993 $4.00
May 1984 $4.00	#209 Sep 1985 NA	#217 May 1986 $4.00	#229 May 1987 $4.00	#241 May 1988 $4.00	#253 May 1989 NA	#265 May 1990 $4.00	#277 May 1991 $4.00	#289 May 1992 $4.00	#301 May 1993 $4.00
un 1984 $4.00	#210 Nov 1985 $4.00	#218 Jun 1986 $6.00	#230 Jun 1987 $4.00	#242 Jun 1988 $4.00	#254 Jun 1989 $4.00	#266 Jun 1990 $6.00	#278 Jun 1991 $4.00	#290 Jun 1992 $4.00	#302 Jun 1993 $4.00
Jul 1984 $4.00	#211 Dec 1985 $4.00	#219 Jul 1986 $4.00	#231 Jul 1987 $4.00	#243 Jul 1988 $4.00	#255 Jul 1989 $4.00	#267 Jul 1990 $4.00	#279 Jul 1991 $4.00	#291 Jul 1992 $4.00	#303 Jul 1993 $4.00
Sep 1984 $4.00	#212 Sl 1985 $4.00	#220 Aug 1986 $4.00	#232 Aug 1987 $4.00	#244 Aug 1988 $4.00	#256 Aug 1989 $4.00	#268 Aug 1990 $4.00	#280 Aug 1991 $4.00	#292 Aug 1992 $4.00	#304 Aug 1993 $4.00
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		#224 Dec 1986 $4.00	#236 Dec 1987 $4.00	#248 Dec 1988 $4.00	#260 Dec 1989 $4.00	#272 Dec 1990 $4.00	#284 Dec 1991 $4.00	#296 Dec 1992 $4.00	#308 Dec 1993 $4.00

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May 1994 NA	May 1995 $4.00	May 1996 $4.00
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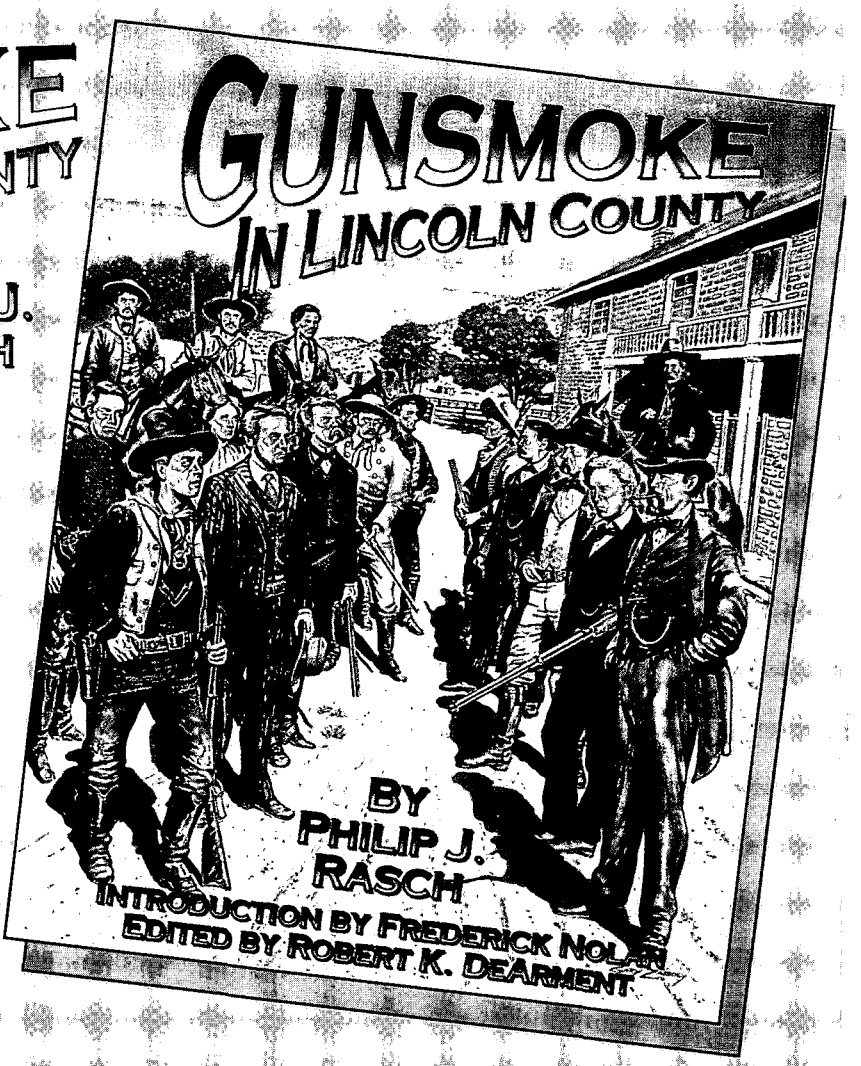

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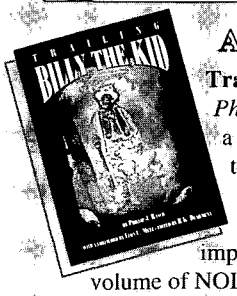

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